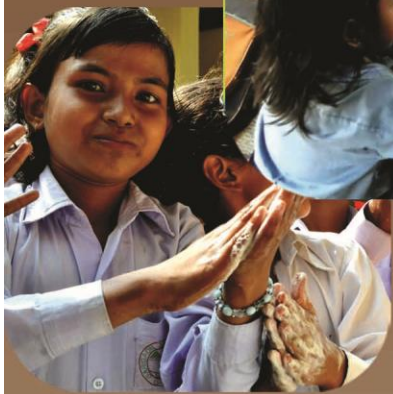
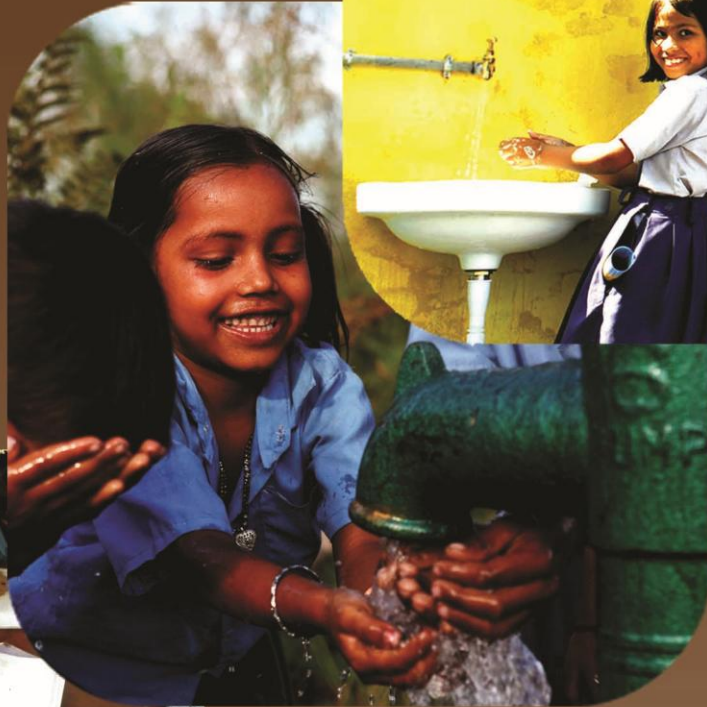


State-level Consultation
Assam
7 - 8 September 2012



**WASH
IN
SCHOOLS**

Making It A Reality

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ACRONYMS

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- Operations & Maintenance (O&M)
- Strengthening Data Monitoring Systems
- Mainstreaming WASH into School Curriculum
- Intersectoral Convergence
- Behaviour Change

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साथ मिलकर हाथ धोकर
स्वस्थ रहें, सुरक्षित रहें

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ACRONYMS

AWC	Anganwadi Centre
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
CEE	Centre for Environment Education
DIET	District Institute of Education Training
DISE	District Information System for Education
DPE	Director of Primary Education
DPEO	District Primary Education Officer
DWSM	District Water and Sanitation Mission
Gol	Government of India
GP	Gram Panchayats
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NUEP	National University of Educational Planning and Administration
NGP	Nirmal Gram Puraskar
NRDWP	National Rural Drinking Water Programme
O&m	Operations & Maintenance
PHED	Public Health Engineering Department
PIP	Programme Implementation Plan
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
RTE	Right to Education
SCERT	State Council for Educational Research & Training
SMC	School Management Committee
SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSHE	School Sanitation and Hygiene Education
TLM	Teaching Learning Materials
TSC	Total Sanitation Campaign
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WSDP	Whole School Development Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A State Consultation on “WASH in all Schools of Assam: Making it a Reality” was jointly organized by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Government of Assam, and UNICEF Assam on 7 - 8 September 2012.

The Consultation provided an opportunity to review progress, share experiences, promote inter-sectoral collaboration and address the key challenges relating to quality implementation of WASH in Schools in Assam. Over the two days, every voice was heard and valued, especially that of children which formed a significant part of the deliberations. Using case studies from the field and on-going activities, participants discussed how to most efficiently and effectively improve the use of safe and sustainable drinking water, clean sanitation facilities and promote hygiene in schools, with specific focus on the needs of children across all social and economic groups in the State.

Since 2009-10, Assam has made rapid progress in providing girls' toilet facilities in schools . While 76.1 per cent of the State's 64,653 elementary¹ schools have drinking water facilities, 39.7 per cent have separate toilets for girls. There are, however, some discrepancies and inconsistencies in data related to WASH in Schools, including the gap between coverage versus functional facilities, which need to be addressed.

Following the Inaugural Session that set the tone for the Consultation, the Technical Sessions deliberated on the key issues including: (1) Infrastructure & Functionality (2) Operation & Maintenance (3) Strengthening Data Monitoring Systems (4) Mainstreaming WASH in School Curriculum (5) Inter-sectoral Convergence and (6) Behaviour Change.

To address some of the challenges and learn more about successful field-level innovations, three presentations, viz. (1) Child-friendly design options tried out in different States; (2) the “Anandshala Model” – a joyful learning pilot carried out in Gujarat, and (3) Assam's own experience in Golaghat District, were shared with participants at the Consultation.

The led to identifying the following priority actions:

Infrastructure & Functionality

- WASH in Schools to be an integral aspect of the Education system by ensuring not just full coverage, but also sustained functionality and continued use of WASH facilities
- Establish standards for WASH in Schools including flexibility in design options.
- The need to develop a “Pupil-Toilet Ratio” as a guide to calculate infrastructure requirements
- Ensure safe drinking water through the provision of water filters or other appropriate measures

Operations & Maintenance (O&M)

- Establish O&M mechanisms for WASH in School including regular funding mechanisms

Strengthening Data Monitoring Systems

- Ensure that appropriate data monitoring systems for WASH in Schools to cover access, functionality and use are in place
- Ensure alignment of all data sources (SSA, NBA, etc) so that a uniform set of data emerge for action

¹ Out of total 64,653 elementary schools in Assam, 44,371 (69 per cent) are Government schools. DISE 2010-11, NUEPA, New Delhi, India

Mainstreaming WASH in School Curriculum

- Ensure effective classroom transaction of WASH-related activities and messages to optimise inclusion of WASH in the curriculum
- Teacher training to accord priority to WASH issues, including classroom transaction methods

Intersectoral Convergence

- Involve all stakeholders at the grassroots level so that WASH is effectively integrated into the Education system
- Seek increasing convergence with Health/NRHM by ensuring inclusion of WASH and linked hygiene practices as an integral element of the School Health Programme
- Ensure that SSA takes the lead in operationalizing these priority areas for WASH in Schools, in partnership with PHED and NRHM

Behaviour Change

- Ensure all children wash their hands with soap before eating mid-day meal as well as after using the toilet
- Encourage children to become change agents in their families and communities
- Establish Menstrual Hygiene Management mechanisms to address the needs of adolescent girls in schools



INAUGURAL SESSION : 07 September, 2012

WASH IN ALL SCHOOLS OF ASSAM : MAKING IT A REALITY

State-level Consultation
on

WASH IN ALL SCHOOLS OF ASSAM : MAKING IT A REALITY

CONCLUDING SESSION : 08 September, 2012

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Background

There is an increasing recognition in India that WASH in Schools supports global efforts to realize our vision of a world in which all children go to schools that provide a safe, healthy and protective environment, that enables children grow, learn and thrive. WASH in Schools improves attendance, health and cognitive development, increases girls' participation, establishes positive hygiene behaviors, offers the opportunity to introduce better WASH practices in families and communities, and addresses issues of inequity and exclusion. Studies confirm that schools are powerful agents of change that enable and encourage sustainable change in society.

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (RTE) Act 2009 provides the legal framework for quality education in India, and mandates minimum norms and standards for WASH infrastructure in schools. With the enactment of the RTE in 2009, and the 2011 Supreme Court Order to all States to provide safe drinking water and separate toilet facilities for girls in all schools, there is now an enabling and conducive environment in place for WASH in Schools.

School and Anganwadi (pre-school) sanitation are integral components of the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA)², a national flagship programme for universal coverage of sanitation under the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS), Government of India.

To accelerate efforts to learn and share experiences on WASH in Schools, a South Asia Regional Conference was jointly organized by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India and UNICEF, on April 24 - 27, 2012, at New Delhi. This Conference was also in response to the 4th South Asia Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN), held in Colombo in April 2011, which committed to raise the profile of WASH in Schools with the objective of ensuring that every school has functioning, child-friendly toilets, separate for girls and boys, with facilities for menstrual hygiene management.

As a follow up to the South Asia Regional Consultation on WASH in Schools, a two-day State-level Consultation on WASH in Schools in Assam was jointly organized by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Govt. of Assam, and UNICEF on 7 - 8 September 2012.

Since 2009-10, Assam has made rapid progress in providing girls' toilet facilities in schools. While 76.1 per cent of the State's 64,653 elementary schools have drinking water facilities, 39.7 per cent have separate toilets for girls.³ These figures, however, point to some discrepancies and inconsistencies in data related to WASH in Schools, including the gap between coverage versus functional facilities, which need to be addressed. The key objectives of the State level consultation on WASH in All Schools of Assam: Making it a reality are as follows:

Key Objectives

1. Identify key gaps, challenges and priority areas for action relating to WASH in Schools of Assam, viz. access, coverage, functionality, girls' toilets and institutional capacity, and develop a time-bound action plan to address these.
2. Review and strengthen monitoring systems to generate evidence and promote sustainable WASH in all Schools of Assam.
3. Review inclusive and participatory practices for WASH in Schools programming at scale in Assam.

²NBA was known as Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) upto April 2012, which was launched in 1999. Section 5.8 of NBA Guidelines (2012) provides details on the institutional toilets. School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE) and Anganwadi Sanitation and Hygiene Education (ASHE) are the components for school and anganwadi (pre-school) sanitation coverage respectively.

³DISE 2010-11, NUEPA, New Delhi, India

The Inaugural Session set the tone for the subsequent rich deliberations of the State-level Consultation “WASH in All Schools of Assam: Making it a Reality”. The key points that emerged are as follows:

- WASH is one of the key components of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 (RTE). In addition to providing academic guidelines, RTE mandates a good school infrastructure including the two most crucial components of (a) availability of safe drinking water and (b) good quality functional toilets for girls and boys. Under RTE, WASH in School is integral to quality education and all those involved must consciously become “change agents” in their sphere of influence
- Functional WASH infrastructure in school would enable children to internalise Water, Sanitation and Hygiene issues, put them into practice, and influence their families and communities to adopt hygiene behaviours. This will ensure that WASH is not limited to the school environment, but also influences key practices in the community at large
- WASH-related information and practices should be mainstreamed into the curriculum, incorporated into teacher training, and transacted in the classroom, rather than being introduced in an ad-hoc manner, just to satisfy the RTE requirements
- Mid-Day-Meal (MDM) Scheme is a very practical entry point for mainstreaming WASH practices not only among the school children, but also teachers, School Management Committees (SMCs), mothers' groups, helpers and all linked stakeholders
- The importance of convergence between Education, School Health and WASH programmes and schemes implemented by the different Government Departments is critical, not only at the State-level, but also at district, sub-district and community levels. This will ensure that all stakeholders get the correct information on the importance of WASH and linked best practices in an integrated manner
- WASH in All Schools of Assam, will also contribute to the achievement of Goal 8 of the Assam Chief Minister's Vision for Women and Children 2016, which envisages 100 per cent enrolment of girls up to Class 8
- The need to address gaps in coverage, put in place a system to ensure appropriate and time operation and maintenance of WASH facilities, and undertake concurrent monitoring to ensure effective use of the facilities were other priority issues that were discussed
- Importance of bringing about a change in the mindset of teachers so that they can effectively transmit WASH messages to students and their communities
- *Nirmal Vidyalaya Purashkar* (Clean School Award) on the lines of the *Nirmal Gram Purashkar* could be introduced by the State Government as an incentive to achieve the goal of WASH in All Schools of Assam

Dignitaries at Consultation :

Ms. L. S. Changsan, Commissioner and Secretary, Elementary Education and Mission Director, SSA, Govt. of Assam

Mr. Prateek Hajela, Commissioner and Secretary, Dept. of Health & Family Welfare and Mission Director, NRHM, Govt. of Assam

Mr. H. K. Borah, Secretary, Public Health Engineering Dept, Govt. of Assam

Dr. Saradi Saikia, Director, SCERT, Govt. of Assam

Mr. P. Lahan, Deputy Secretary, Elementary Education, Govt. of Assam

Mr. Nripendra Sarma, State Nodal Officer, Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, PHED, Govt. of Assam

Ms. Suzanne Coates, Chief, WASH, UNICEF, India Country Office

Ms. Jeroo Master, Chief, UNICEF, Assam Field Office

Mr. Kabir Vajpeyi, Advisor, Ministry of Human Resource Development cum Director, VINYAS

Mr. Atul Pandya, Programme Director, Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad

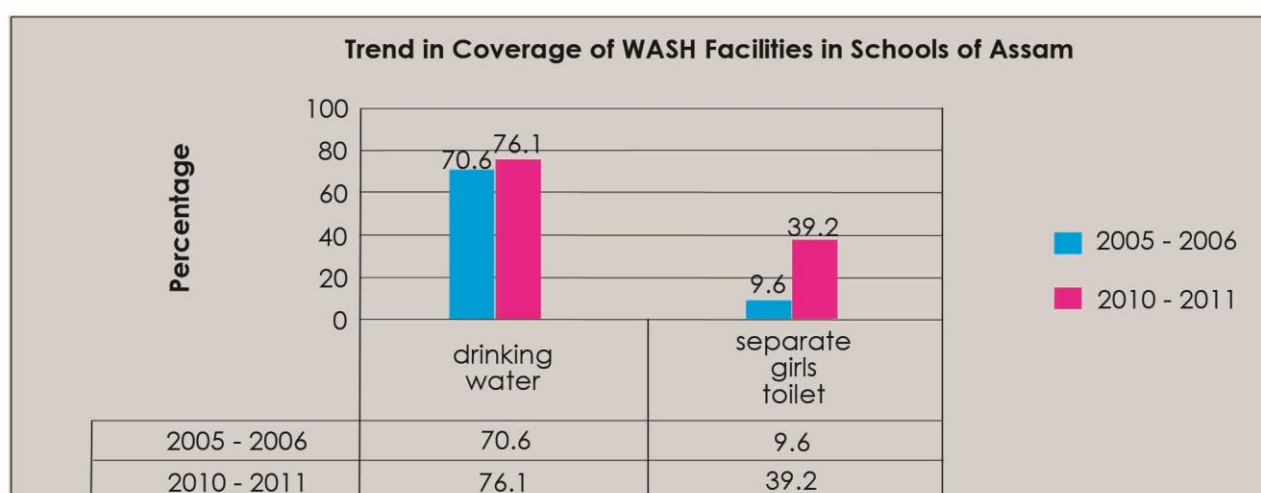
Ms. Mamita Bora Thakkar, WASH Specialist, UNICEF, India Country Office

TECHNICAL SESSIONS : KEY ISSUES

The technical sessions deliberated on the key issues pertaining to WASH in Schools, including: (1) Infrastructure & Functionality (2) Operation & Maintenance (3) Strengthening Data Monitoring Systems (4) Mainstreaming WASH in School Curriculum (5) Inter sectoral Convergence (6) Behaviour Change.

Infrastructure & Functionality

Although, there is encouraging progress of water and sanitation facilities in schools, functionality and use remain a challenge. As per DISE⁴ 2010-11⁵, while 39.2 per cent rural schools in Assam are covered with separate girls' toilet facilities, 74 per cent of these facilities are functional



To address this challenge of coverage of WASH facilities in schools, the following steps would be required to be taken on a priority basis:

- Based on segregated DISE⁶ and other data, schools that are yet to be covered with safe drinking water, separate toilets for girls & boys and hand washing facilities need to be identified at District level.
- District-level roadmap to be developed, reviewed and approved at the State-level with adequate provision of funds
- In collaboration with PHED, SSA to provide the required infrastructure so that the facilities can be built in a time-bound manner.

As the quality of the WASH infrastructure provided is a critical determining factor in its functionality and use, this aspect needs to be accorded highest priority. This can be effectively achieved by concurrent monitoring and supervision by the SMCs jointly with the concerned departmental officials. The community can also play a crucial role to ensure upkeep and safety of WASH infrastructure from being misused or damaged during off-school hours.

⁴DISE: District Information System for Education

⁵DISE 2010-11 provides the latest data on functionality of toilet facilities in School. Functionality and usage of WASH facilities are important parameters, which needs to be mainstreamed in the DISE and IMIS.

⁶Refer fact sheet on WASH in Schools of Assam: An Update based on DISE data analysis from 2005-06 to 2011-12, jointly published by SSA and UNICEF in September 2012.

Operations & Maintenance (O&M)

One of the major factors contributing to the “functionality gap” of WASH in schools is its poor operations & maintenance (O&M). This has been observed across India and can be attributed to the fact that there is a lack of sustainable Government funding mechanisms for O&M of WASH infrastructure created in schools, without which the functionality gap cannot be addressed.

To ensure functionality and effective use of WASH in school infrastructure, States needs to advocate with Central Ministries⁷ for earmarking of funds from the current provisions as well as additional provision for O&M. It was proposed that the Government of Assam writes to the Central Government in this regard to build a case for effective O&M of the WASH in school infrastructure.

In the meantime, to address immediate O&M needs, alternative sources of funding could be explored such as:

- annual General Management Grant for basic O&M of WASH infrastructure in schools
- use of Mid-Day-Meal⁸ untied funds for provision of soap
- annual school grants received by the SMCs and School Infrastructure Maintenance grants

Strengthening Data Monitoring Systems

Data inconsistency is one of the major challenges to identifying the gaps in WASH in school coverage, functionality and use. Although the data generated by DISE₉ and IMIS₁₀, use the same indicators, inconsistencies remain on account of differences in definition, different data collection methods, and different data sets.

The baseline survey for the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA), which will be initiated by PHED, Assam in last quarter of 2012, will be an opportunity to address these gaps vis-a-vis definition, data sets and data collection methods, by making the required changes to synchronise and harmonise DISE and IMIS monitoring indicators.

Mainstreaming WASH into School Curriculum

As per the Supreme Court guidelines, WASH components have been mainstreamed into Environmental Education and Social Science Curriculum from classes 3 to 8. Ideally this should be expanded to other subjects and integrated into the day-to-day classroom transaction and other activities carried out by the students, rather than addressing it in a piece-meal to satisfy RTE requirements.

The State Council for Educational Research & Training (SCERT) playing a key role in curriculum development and teacher training programmes, and hence it is an important partner in WASH in Schools. It is crucial to bring about a change in the mind-set of teachers, so that they can effectively communicate WASH messages to students as part of class room transactions and support creative activities engaging children. This will ensure that children will gradually emerge as agents of change within their communities on key hygiene practices.

The WASH in School curriculum developed by SCERT Assam has two broad objectives:

1. Developing awareness of the environment to bring about improvement for the benefit of society and mankind as a whole.
2. Developing awareness of health, hygiene, environmental sanitation, civic sense and cooperative social living through various curricular programmes.

⁷Ministry of Human Resource & Development (MoHRD) & Ministry of Drinking Water & Sanitation (MDWS)

⁸During the State level Consultation, a Directive on using MDM funds for provision of soap was issued by Commissioner and Secretary, Elementary Education, SSA (Refer Annexure page i)

⁹Data monitoring tool of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Ministry of Human Resource & Development (MoHRD)

¹⁰Data monitoring tool of Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS)

The Group Work that followed the technical discussions suggested that active engagement of children in WASH-related activities is a much more effective teaching tool than merely including WASH concepts in textbooks. The visibility and functionality of WASH components in school – ideally designed in a child-friendly manner -- is an essential component of WASH education.

Inter-sectoral Convergence

To maximise on the benefits of WASH in Schools, it is imperative to have intersectoral convergence in true spirit as against isolated and disjointed efforts. In the Inaugural Session, it was highlighted that under RTE, WASH in Schools is everybody's responsibility and all those involved must consciously play the role of change agents in their area of influence.

More importantly, convergence between Government departments is critical for communicating the importance of WASH for better hygiene, health and development to the entire community. Such convergence needs to go beyond just physical coverage of water and sanitation facilities as taken up by the Education and PHED Departments, and include behaviour change aspects linked to effective use, maintenance and personal hygiene. For example, WASH in Schools should have strong linkages with the School Health Programme¹¹ which will be rolled out by the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) across all districts of Assam in the last quarter of 2012.

Behaviour Change

Behaviour change pertaining effective use of WASH in School infrastructure as well as adopting linked hygiene practices by children, teachers, caretakers, and even cooks who prepare the mid-day meals is a very critical element to ensure that the eventual gains envisaged by WASH in terms of healthy development, reduced school drop-out and enhanced learning will be realised.

To achieve this, some key areas pertaining to behaviour change discussed during the Consultation were as follows:

Hand Washing:

This should be made mandatory for all children in all schools, before the mid-day meal and after using the toilet. Provision of soap could be made from funds under either the School Management Grants or Mid-day Meal funds. Innovations around handwashing can be introduced so that it becomes a habit.

Curriculum:

Although hygiene is integrated into the existing school curriculum, the challenge is how this curriculum is transacted in the classroom and whether hygiene education is given due importance. The teachers' education curriculum and training carried out by SCERT should emphasise hygiene education.

Menstrual Hygiene Management:

Hygiene and privacy is very important for adolescent girls, and schools should be geared to meet the needs of this vulnerable group. Evidence has shown that the high level of drop-outs among adolescent girls is linked to the lack of adequate facilities, privacy and correct information about this aspect of girls' lives.

¹¹It will be rolled out by NRHM, DoHFW, in all districts of Assam in last quarter of 2012. As an outcome of the consultation, WASH has been included as one of the key elements of the School Health Programme in Assam.

Children's Voices

Two students of Medhipara L.P. School, Kamrup addressed the participants; they sang a song highlighting importance of WASH in Schools and raised some concerns and issues from a child's perspective, viz:

- Limited safe drinking water
- No dustbins in classrooms
- No compost pits in the school campus
- Lack of boundary walls around school
- Inadequate water for cleaning the toilets
- Poorly maintained toilets
- Very few separate girls' toilets
- Non availability of soap for hand washing

The students also highlighted mothers group should be actively involved when mid-day meals are prepared and served to ensure its hygiene.

The consultation also provided a platform to share drawings made by children on "WASH in Schools" as a part of the SSA, UNICEF and CEE partnership.



Sharing of children's consultation findings

Welcome song with WASH messages



EXPERIENCES FROM THE FIELD

The Consultation also provided an opportunity to share field-level experiences of WASH in Schools, from Assam as well as other States. A summary of the three presentations is given below:

Child-friendly WASH: Designs & Principles

In his presentation, Mr. Kabir Vajpeyi, Advisor, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, and Director, VINYAS explored the concept of child friendliness and design principles for WASH in Schools, which puts the child at the centre of the process right from the planning stage to execution.

As it is adults who plan and design WASH interventions, their concept of "child friendliness" represents their own attitudes towards children. In fact, "child friendliness" is all about 'being at the psychological and physiological comfort level of a child' and providing facilities that are 'useful and accessible for all growing children attending the school'.

WASH makes a crucial contribution to the development goals of education including access, retention, equity and quality. Also, RTE shifts the focus from "how to teach" to "how children learn" and, in this new perspective, child-friendly and inclusive initiatives and settings – including those of WASH – are critical.

In the context of RTE, the Whole School Development Plan (WSDP), an initiative of the Government of India's Ministry of Human Resource Development, envisions the school as "an ecosystem for learning" which is (a) child development-friendly, (b) inclusive, (c) learning resource-rich, (d) safe and secure from hazards, (e) optimum resource-utilising place, and (f) developed through culturally and environmentally sustainable practices.

WASH is addressed in an integrated approach in WSDP as (a) it is included in the curriculum and teacher sensitisation programmes; (b) is an aspect of school planning; (c) is represented in choices regarding software, hardware and maintenance; and (d) is a consideration in decisions regarding resource utilisation, conservation, recycling and waste management.

Whole School Development Planning

WASH is addressed in an integrated manner in WSDP



The presentation also included Universal Design Principles as a guide to augment the existing WASH infrastructure as well as the construction of new facilities

Universal Design Principles:

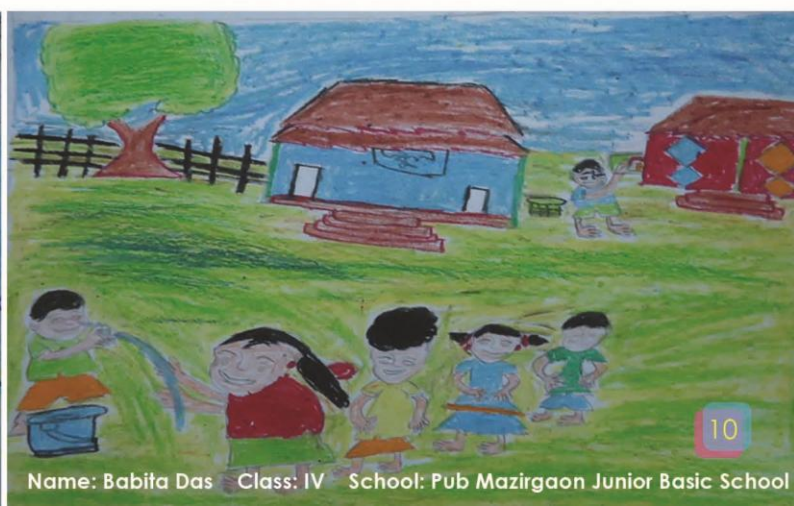
- 1 Child friendliness: children must have physiological and psychological comfort while using the facility. They must feel safe while using the facility
- 2 Cultural sensitivity
- 3 Adaptable to different geo-climatic conditions
- 4 Match the function and investment: the provision of amenities must be based on actual need since the investment made should not go to waste
- 5 Design provision must be integral to whole school plan and not isolated from its present & future needs
- 6 Modular in nature for site-specific flexibility and costing
- 7 Expandable core for future needs. This must be done without duplicating resources and without affecting functionality, including ventilation
- 8 Address typologies of site shape and form
- 9 Universal and inclusive so it can be used by children, teachers, disabled users, etc
- 10 Address user tendencies, behaviour and preference (for instance: privacy needs, Indian WC, etc.)
- 11 Minimise/conserves water use
- 12 Designed and located for low maintenance
- 13 Maximise natural light, ventilation and sunlight penetration in design for effective hygiene
- 14 Segregated solid and grey waste matter management
- 15 Accessible storage: cleaning agents should be located so as to be easy accessible by children and adults for cleaning and maintenance
- 16 Overlap and facilitate multiple use of facilities created
- 17 Water storage at comfortable height
- 18 Linkage of school sanitation and hygiene with Mid-Day Meal (MDM)

In India, Whole School Development Plan models have been demonstrated in Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, New Delhi Municipal Council Schools, Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, West Bengal in collaboration with State SSA with technical support of VINYAS and UNICEF support in select states.¹²

¹²Govt. of India, VINYAS & UNICEF(2012), Effectively using BALA in Elementary Schools: A teacher's manual, Pp. 12



Name: Ankur Thakuria Class: IV School: Pub Sarpara LP School



Name: Babita Das Class: IV School: Pub Mazirgaon Junior Basic School

THE ANANDSHALA MODEL



The Anandshala model is based on child-friendly pedagogic choices and a participatory development approach leading to a joyful learning environment for the children. It involves village communities, local institutions and state governments as key partners and stakeholders in a process that is context specific, transparent, sustainable, efficient and replicable.

A collaborative effort between UNICEF (technical and financial support), the Centre for Environment Education (CEE) (implementing agency) and DIET, DPE/DPEO (administering agency), Anandshala has been implemented in 40 government primary schools in three tribal districts of Gujarat¹³(Vadodara, Dang and Valsad) and replicated in Jammu & Kashmir (10 schools), Rajasthan (one school) and Chhattisgarh (19 schools).

The Anandshala model is based on a "3H Formula": Head (cognitive learning), Heart (emotional learning) and Hand (creative learning) and works in three basic areas:

(1) School infrastructure; (2) Teaching-learning practices; and (3) Participation.

Mr. Atul Pandya, Programme Co-ordinator, CEE, Ahmedabad, concluded his presentation by saying that, 'facilitating the development of a common vision for the school, a rights perspective, and a community stake are necessary conditions for the proper utilisation of the school fund and maintenance of school facilities, both hardware and software.



The Anandshala Model : Basic Features

School infrastructure:

- Safe and secure drinking water
- Sanitation
- Waste management units established, in use and maintained
- Personal health and hygiene concepts understood and in practice
- Green and play areas

Teaching learning practices:

- Active teacher and parent participation
- Facilitation for learning (to know, to do, to live together, to be)
- Learner centric and self-learning methodology
- Locale-specific, creative material development
- Correlation of curriculum with life and livelihoods
- Life skills oriented vocational activities

Participation:

- Village community shares ownership and responsibility
- Institutional commitment to scale up (CRC, BRC, DIET, DPEO)

¹³Piloting of anandshala model in Gujarat with UNICEF support was carried out in year 2002-03

THE GOLAGHAT EXPERIENCE, ASSAM

Mr. Thangal, Head Teacher of Garjan Nabajyoti Lower Primary School, Golaghat District, shared an experiment he has tried out in his school. In Garjan village, 75 per cent of the 152 households belong to a Scheduled Tribe, with very poor sanitation and hygiene standards in the village as well as the school.

When sanitary toilets were introduced the school, the staff noticed that they were not being used by the students as they were not familiar with such facilities, as they did not have toilets in their homes. As Head Teacher, he wanted to do something about this, and formed a group of ten students, to conduct a survey on household sanitation and hygiene facilities and practices in the community. This was followed by a series of awareness meetings, rallies, quiz competitions and lectures on WASH issues with the community members, teachers and children, and the school staff were encouraged to celebrate Global Hand Washing Day, World Water Day and World Health Day, with active community involvement.



The outcomes of this initiative showed positive results -- the school campus is clean, the mid-day meal kitchen and school garden are well maintained. The school has provided dustbins across the campus to help keep it clean. With active support from teachers, a Student Health Card has been introduced and is kept regularly updated with help of the mothers' group. The responsibility for maintaining good hygiene practices among school children has been distributed between the mothers' group and Student Council. Parents must report on their children's hygiene practices – hand washing, dental care, etc. – to the Saturday Club. Although some parents were initially reluctant to comply with this, peer pressure and support eventually made them fall in line. Teaching

Learning Materials (TLMs) were introduced in all classrooms to teach WASH-related concepts. The classroom walls and toilets were attractively decorated with WASH-related messages and flower gardens in the vicinity of the toilet helped beautify the area.

At community festivals in the village, children perform dramas and skits on WASH issues. The school has also encouraged the use of bio-degradable materials for pandals (canopies) and utensils in which food is served during village functions in order to minimise the village's waste load.

Through this experiment, Garjan Nabajyoti Lower Primary School staff have been able to introduce WASH practices not only in their school, but also in their village, with the active engagement of school children and the community.

KEY OBSERVATIONS AND CHALLENGES

The 2-day Consultation provided an opportunity to the participants to deliberate on key issues relating to WASH in Schools of Assam. To facilitate this process, the Group Work focussed on the following four broad issues:

- a. Monitoring
- b. Standards, norms and design principles
- c. Hygiene: hand-washing and curriculum inclusion
- d. Coverage, access, functionality and O&M

A synthesis of the group discussions and subsequent deliberations led to the following key observations and major challenges:

- 1 Poor O&M of toilets and water sources threaten sustained coverage
- 2 A wide range of toilet designs have been approved for construction. However, in many cases, the technology and design used are not child-friendly, i.e. the designs are not suited to the needs of children, especially girls
- 3 Monitoring of WASH in Schools needs strengthening to incorporate quality indicators, complemented with more local evidence and improved capacities to collect and analyze data. For this, the data generated by both SSA and NBA need to be aligned
- 4 Greater ownership of WASH in Schools by the Education Department. This would include teachers' training on WASH issues, mainstreaming WASH in the curriculum, maintenance of WASH facilities in schools and, very importantly, inculcating hand washing practices before and after the mid-day meal
- 5 Lack of focus on Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) in upper primary schools (Classes 5 to 8). Teachers have limited capacities to deal with the issue and are not supported with appropriate educational materials
- 6 Sustaining appropriate hygiene behaviours remains a major challenge in the WASH in Schools programme. Critical behaviours need to be monitored closely, supported by appropriate communication strategies focussing on behaviour change



CONCLUDING SESSION : PRIORITY ACTIONS AND OUTCOMES

The 2-day State Consultation on 'WASH in All Schools of Assam: Making it a Reality' led to following priority actions and outcomes

Priority Actions

The following priority areas for action were identified to realise the vision of 'WASH in All Schools of Assam' in a time bound manner:

Infrastructure & Functionality

- WASH in Schools to be an integral aspect of the Education system by ensuring not just full coverage, but also sustained functionality and continued use of WASH facilities
- Establish standards for WASH in Schools including flexibility in design options.
- The need to develop a "Pupil-Toilet Ratio" as a guide to calculate infrastructure requirements
- Ensure safe drinking water through the provision of water filters or other appropriate measures

Operations & Maintenance (O&M)

- Establish O&M mechanisms for WASH in School including regular funding mechanisms

Strengthening Data Monitoring Systems

- Ensure that appropriate data monitoring systems for WASH in Schools to cover access, functionality and use are in place
- Ensure alignment of all data sources (SSA, NBA, etc) so that a uniform set of data emerge for action

Mainstreaming WASH in School Curriculum

- Ensure effective classroom transaction of WASH-related activities and messages to optimise inclusion of WASH in the curriculum
- Teacher training to accord priority to WASH issues, including classroom transaction methods

Intersectoral Convergence

- Involve all stakeholders at the grassroots level so that WASH is effectively integrated into the Education system
- Seek increasing convergence with Health/NRHM by ensuring inclusion of WASH and linked hygiene practices as an integral element of the School Health Programme
- Ensure that SSA takes the lead in operationalizing these these priority areas for WASH in Schools, in partnership with PHED and NRHM.

Behaviour Change

- Ensure all children wash their hands with soap before eating mid-day meal as well as after using the toilet
- Encourage children to become change agents in their families and communities
- Establish Menstrual Hygiene Management mechanisms to address the needs of adolescent girls in schools

OUTCOMES

The Consultation led to the following concrete outcomes :

- **Use of MDM funds for Provision of Soap:**

The Elementary Education Department of the Govt. of Assam has issued a directive on using the untied funds under the Mid-day Meal scheme for provision of soap, to ensure that handwashing with soap before eating and after defecation becomes a routine practice in all schools of Assam. This directive has come into effect from 07 September 2012. *Refer Annexure page i*

- **School Health Programme:**

Key elements of behaviour change relating to WASH in School viz. menstrual hygiene, handwashing with soap and personal hygiene have been mainstreamed in the School Health Programme of NRHM, which will cover all Government rural schools in Assam.

- **Revision of Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) Programme Implementation Plan (PIP):**

Background work for baseline survey for the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan has been initiated by PHED based on the MDWS, GoI guidelines. This exercise will also include revision of targets for institutional sanitation including schools and anganwadi centres (pre-school). It will provide an opportunity to identify schools not covered with WASH infrastructure, and ensure that these are included in the revised PIP. This will be effectively achieved by convergence of PHED and SSA before initiation of the baseline survey for sharing the data sets of DISE and IMIS and address the existing data discrepancies. The baseline survey is expected to be completed by December 2012.

- **Peer-to-Peer Learning:**

In January 2013, the Garjan Nabajyoti Lower Primary School along with three other schools of Golaghat district will host a learning visit on WASH in Schools for Head Teachers from the 20 schools in Kamrup District covered under the Child Friendly Schools & System (CFSS) initiative supported by UNICEF. It is expected that such a learning visit will help in replicating the best practices in the CFSS pilot schools.



GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
ELEMENTARY EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
DISPUR, GUWAHATI-6

No. PMA. 29/2012/Pt.I/1

Dated Dispur, the 7th Sept, 2012

From : L.S. Changsan, IAS
Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Elementary Education Department, Dispur

To : 1. The District Mission Coordinator (All)
2. The District Elementary Education Officer, (All)

Sub : WASH in Elementary Schools

Sir,

As you know Government of Assam is making serious efforts to cover all primary and upper primary schools of Assam with water, sanitation and hand washing facilities on priority and is focusing on sustained use of these infrastructures. While the coverage of schools with separate toilets for boys and girls has increased from 10% in 2007-08 to 72% in 2010-11, the functionality of toilet remains low.

Another major issue is of hand washing with soap by the children before the mid-day meal in schools. As you all know, inadequate hygiene and health behavior results in a huge burden of avoidable hygiene-related diseases for children such as diarrhoea and intestinal worms leading to school absenteeism, impacts children's physical and cognitive development as well as education attainment. Hand washing with soap is a proven effective and inexpensive first line of defense against diarrhoea.

I am happy to note that Government of India is keen to address this by institutionalizing the daily practice of hand washing with soap by all children in all schools of the country before the mid-day meal. A circular to this effect has been issued by the Joint Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy, MHRD, GOI, dated, July 19, 2012. It further states that the MDM guidelines vide MHRD circular number F.1-15/2009- Desk(MDM) of 21st July 2010, clearly lists soap as an admissible item of expenditure to facilitate hand washing with soap before and after eating Mid-Day Meal (MDM).

(Contd.....2)

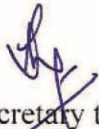

(2)

Government of Assam is totally committed to mainstream hand washing with soap in all schools of Assam as a part of daily school routine, which will contribute to improved health and education outcomes for children of Assam. I therefore instruct all schools in the state to **urgently** act upon the following:

1. Organise dedicated time within the daily time table of schools that will allow enough time for all children, cooks and teachers in the school to wash their hands with soap simultaneously, i.e. large numbers of the school community being able to wash their hands at the same time. This is efficient but also effective – we know that seeing others hand washing with soap is an essential element of the practice becoming a habit.
2. Wherever proper hand washing facilities are either not available or inadequate for all children, buckets and mugs can be used to supplement the available facilities.
3. Teachers and headmasters should monitor this activity on a daily basis; perhaps as part of a curriculum based activity (in mathematics for example).
4. These figures must be available for wider monitoring and verification purposes.

It is expected that all DEOs/DPMs monitor this closely and ensure that hand washing is taken up seriously in all schools as a part of daily school activity by every child before the mid-day meals.

Yours faithfully,



Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Elementary Education Department


Memo No. PMA. 29/2012/Pt.I/1-A
Copy to :

Dated Dispur, the 7th Sept, 2012

1. OSD to Minister Education, Assam for kind appraisal of the Hon'ble Minister.
2. The Mission Director, National Rural Health Mission, Assam, Guwahati.
3. The Secretary, Public Health Engineering Department, Hengrabari, Guwahati-6.
4. The Deputy Commissioner, (all district)
5. The Principal Secretary, KAAC, Diphu / DHAC, Haflong and BTC, Kokrajhar.

By order etc.,


Deputy Secretary to the Govt. of Assam
Elementary Education Department

WASH in All Schools of Assam: Making it a reality State Level Consultation

07 – 08 September 2012
NEDFI Hall, Dispur, Guwahati

TIME	SESSION	PRESENTERS
DAY - 1	07 SEPTEMBER 2012, FRIDAY	
09:30 - 10:00	Registration	
10:00 - 10:15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome song by school children and felicitation of dignitaries • Lighting of the lamp 	
10:15 - 10:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Inaugural Address: Right to Education: an opportunity to mainstream WASH in All Schools • Release of "WASH in Schools of Assam: An Update" 	L.S.Changsan, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Education Dept. & MD, SSA, Govt. of Assam
10:30 - 10:40	WASH in Schools: Priorities for Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan	H. K. Borah, Secretary, PHED, Govt. of Assam
10:40 - 11:00	Children's voices: Outcome of children's consultation	School Children
11:00 - 11:10	WASH in All Schools of Assam : Meeting the expectation from the consultation	Jeroo Master, Chief, UNICEF Assam field Office
11:10 - 11:45	TEA BREAK	
	TECHNICAL SESSION	
	Chair: Mr. P. Lahan, Deputy Secretary, Elementary Education,	Govt. of Assam
11:45 - 11:50	Opening remarks by the Chair	Mamita Thakkar, UNICEF, Delhi;
11:50 - 12:00	WASH in Schools matters	Rushabh Hemani, UNICEF, Assam;
12:00 - 12:10	Present scenario of WASH in Schools of Assam	D. Dutta, Reader, SCERT;
12:10 - 12:20	WASH in School (WinS) in curriculum	Sushmita Sutradhar, Reader, SCERT
12:20 - 12:40	Child friendly WASH : Designs and Principles	Kabir Vajpeyi, Advisor, MoHRD, Govt. of India
12:40 - 13:00	WASH in Anandshala Model Schools: Experience from Gujarat	Atul Pandya, CEE, Ahmedabad
13:00 - 13:15	Case Study from Assam : O&M of WASH in School	R. Thangal, Headmaster, Golaghat District
13:15 - 13:25	School Health Programme : Opportunities for WASH	Prateek Hajela, IAS, Commissioner & Secretary, Health & FW & MD, NRHM, Govt. of Assam
13:25 - 13:30	Wrap Up	Session Chair
13:30 - 14:30	LUNCH BREAK	
14:30 - 16:00	Group Work	All Participants
16:00 - 16:15	TEA BREAK	
16:15 - 17:00	Group Work (Presentation Preparation)	All Participants
17:00 - 17:15	Wrap Up and Planning for Day - 2	UNICEF

**WASH in All Schools of Assam: Making it a reality
State Level Consultation**

07 – 08 September 2012
NEDFI Hall, Dispur, Guwahati

TIME	SESSION	PRESENTERS
DAY - 2	08 SEPTEMBER 2012, SATURDAY	
09:30 - 10:30	Preparation of Group Work Presentation	
10:30 - 11:00	Positive Experience Sharing by Participants	District Team Facilitator : Mamita Bora Thakkar, UNICEF, New Delhi
11:00 - 11:30	TEA BREAK	
11:30 - 12:00	Recap of Day - 1	Rushab Hemani, UNICEF, Assam
12:00 - 12:10	UNICEF's perspectives on WASH in Schools : Key Priorities	Suzzane Coates, Chief, WASH, UNICEF, New Delhi
12:10 - 12:40	Group Work Presentation	Chair : Suzzane Coates, Chief, WASH, UNICEF; Kabir Vajpeyi, Advisor, MoHRD; Nripendra Sarma, TSC CO-ordinator, PHED, Govt. of Assam
12:40 - 13:00	Statement of Action and Closing Remarks	L. S. Changson, Commisioner & Secretary, Education Dept. & MD, SSA, Govt. of Assam
13:10 - 13:15	Vote of Thanks	Pramila Manoharan, UNICEF, Assam
13:15 - 14:00	LUNCH	

ANNEXURE

List of Participants :

National Dignitaries

Ms. Suzanne Coates, Chief, WASH, UNICEF, India Country Office

Mr. Kabir Vajpeyi, Advisor, Ministry of Human Resource Development cum Director, VINYAS

Mr. Atul Pandya, Programme Director, Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad

Ms. Mamita Bora Thakkar, WASH Specialist, UNICEF, India Country Office

State Dignitaries

Ms. L. S. Changsan, Commissioner and Secretary, Elementary Education and Mission Director, SSA, Govt. of Assam

Mr. Prateek Hajela, Commissioner and Secretary, Dept. of Health & Family Welfare and Mission Director, NRHM, Govt. of Assam

Mr. H. K. Borah, Secretary, Public Health Engineering Department, Govt. of Assam

Dr. Saradi Saikia, Director, SCERT, Govt. of Assam

Mr. P. Lahan, Deputy Secretary, Elementary Education, Govt. of Assam

Mr. Nripendra Sarma, State Nodal Officer, Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, PHED, Govt. of Assam

Dr. D. K. Dutta, Reader, SCERT

Dr. Sushmita S. Das, Reader, SCERT

Dr. Anjanta Brahma, Reader, SCERT

Mr. R. M. Kakati, State Programme Officer (Teacher's Training), SSA

Mr. D. K. Das, Chief Engineer (P), PHED, Govt. of Assam

Mr. B. Bhattacharya, Asst. Chief Engineer, Lower Assam Zone, Guwahati

Mr. Nripendra Sharma, Nodal Officer, Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, PHED, Assam

Mr. Thengal, Headmaster, Gorjan Nabjyoti LPS, Golaghat

CEE representatives

UNICEF Assam team

District Participants *(Representatives from all districts of Assam)*

Children from Medhipara L. P. School, Kamrup & Nahira L. P. & M. P. Schools, Rampur Block, Kamrup

District Mission Co-ordinator

District Project Officer (Community Mobilization)

District Project Engineer

Zonal Co-ordinators, PHED

