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COMPENDIUM OF GOOD PRACTICES ON THE SAFE REOPENING OF SCHOOLS

WASH and IPC related experiences during COVID-19

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1 Abbreviations

AE	Assistant Engineer
AIDMI	All India Disaster Mitigation Institute
AIIMS	All India Institute of Medical Sciences
ASAH	Apni Suraksha Apne Hath
ASCI	Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad
AWC	Anganwadi Centre
AWH	Anganwadi Helper
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
BaLA	Building as Learning Aid
BCC	Behaviour Change Communication
BEPC	Bihar Education Project Council
BRC	Block Resource Coordinator
BSEIDC	Bihar State Educational Infrastructure Development Corporation
CAB	COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviours
CACR	Citizens Association for Child Rights
CCI	Child Care Institution
CEE	Centre for Environment Education
CFAR	Centre for Advocacy and Research
CRC	Cluster Resource Coordinators
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CWSN	Child with Special Needs
CYDA	Centre for Youth Development and Activities
DIKSHA	Digital Infrastructure for Knowledge Sharing
DMF	District Mineral Fund
DMF	District Mining Foundation
DoSEL	Department of School Education & Literacy
FFC	Fifteenth Finance Commission
FLW	Field Level Workers
GHD	Global Handwashing Day
GoJ	Government of Jharkhand
GP	Gram Panchayat
GPDP	Gram Panchayat Development Plan
HWWS	Handwashing with Soap
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ITDA	Integrated Tribal Development Agency
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IPC	Infection Prevention and Control
JE	Junior Engineers
JJM	Jal Jeevan Mission
JRNA	Joint Rapid Needs Assessment
MCGM	Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai
MDM	Mid-Day Meal
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme

MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management
MHTHWS	Minimal Hand Touch Handwashing Stations
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoJS	Ministry of Jal Shakti
MSCERT	Maharashtra State Council of Educational Research and Training
NCERT	National Council for Educational Research and Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSS	National Service Scheme
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
ODF	Open Defecation Free
OVK	Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp
PA	Project Administrator
RCCE	Risk Communications and Community engagement
SACRED	Society for Action in Creative Education and Development
SAP	Swachhata Action Plan
SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communication
SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission
SBSV	Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SHG	Self-Help Group
SLWM	Solid and Liquid Waste Management
SMC	School Management Committee
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SSG	Shala Swachhata Gunak
SVSB	Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya
ULB	Urban Local Body
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UT	Union Territory
VSTF	Village Social Transformation Foundation
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WinS	WASH in Schools
WVI	World Vision India

2 Preface

The government-led education system in India provides not only educational services through schools but also complementing services related to health, nutrition and other life skills development as well. Schools in diverse local settings are a medium to reach millions of children across the country, especially the marginalized section. Since March 2020, COVID-19 led to school closure, thus posing a new challenge of ensuring delivery of several essential services to children effectively.

Following the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) order dated 30th September 2020, guiding Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) were issued by the Ministry of Education (MoE) in October 2020 for the re-opening of schools after 15th October 2020 (for schools located outside containment zones), in a graded manner. States and Union Territories (UTs) were advised to take decisions regarding school reopening in consultation with their respective school/institution managements. Although attempts for school reopening have been implemented in a phased manner (in hybrid mode), the frequent resurgence of the COVID-19 wave in the last two years, state-specific COVID-19 contexts, concerns over the preparedness of schools, safety measures and vaccination for children had its constant lingering shadow on safe school operation and reopening. Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and infection prevention and control (IPC) were identified as key priority areas for safe school reopening.

Given the above scenario, and with education being a concurrent subject, multi-faceted local efforts were taken up for safe school reopening at the State/UT level. All key stakeholders, viz. government, partner agencies, civil society organisation (CSOs), private sector and communities, are playing a key role to facilitate safe schools. Various local interventions and initiatives engaged different stakeholders in the school community (teachers, children/students, school management committees (SMCs), parents/guardians, gram panchayat/urban local body members) to ensure safe schooling.

“Compendium of Good Practices on the Safe Reopening of Schools: WASH and IPC related experiences during COVID-19” is a compilation of key initiatives and measures taken up in UNICEF supported states for WASH and IPC as part of the safe school reopening endeavour. It is hoped that this compilation will serve as a key reference for schools and communities for cross-learning, and strategizing actions and initiatives, with appropriate adaptation, to strengthen WASH and IPC for safe school operations in the pandemic and beyond.

3 Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the people and organizations that have contributed to the compilation of these good practices.

First and foremost, we are thankful to the Secretary, Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Government of India, Ms. Anita Karwal, and the Joint Secretary, DOSEL, Shri Maneesh Garg, for providing us the opportunity to contribute in the efforts of DoSEL to ensure COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviours (CABs) at the time of safe reopening of schools.

The assistance of State Education Departments, Water Supply and Sanitation Departments, Public Health Engineering Departments, Tribal Welfare Departments, Panchayati Raj and Rural Development Departments and Urban Development Departments, is thankfully acknowledged for leading the efforts highlighted through the case studies in this document.

We are grateful to UNICEF State office teams in Gujarat, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Jharkhand and West Bengal for supporting the initiatives included in this compendium and providing valuable inputs for identification of the good practices.

These good practices could not have materialised without pro-active efforts of school and village level stakeholders including the staff of key departments, elected public representatives, teachers, principals, students, their families, and other local champions.

We are also thankful for the documentation support of UNICEF consultants Ram Chander and Karishma Kadyan, and colleagues in the India Country Office, especially Swathi Manchikanti, under the overall leadership of WASH Section Chief, Nicolas Osbert.

UNICEF WASH Section
India Country Office

20th June 2022

4 WASH initiatives for safe school reopening

4.1 Training module for teachers on COVID-19 Responsive Behaviour on the DIKSHA portal of the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)

Education has been one of the most affected sectors in India during the pandemic. Given the scale of the education sector (more than 1.5 million schools in India), lockdowns and school closures from March 2020 onwards impacted the learning of nearly 240 million children. Although regular school re-opening guidelines from the Ministry of Education (MoE) provided much-needed guidance to States/UTs, and distance learning approaches provided an interim option, safe school reopening with adaptation to COVID-19 appropriate behaviours and functional WASH facilities is still imperative. Teachers play a critical role in ensuring behaviour change and effective adoption of IPC measures. There is an immediate need to build their capacity at scale on COVID-19 responsive behaviours as one of the essential prerequisites for school reopening.

Key Highlights/ Features

- Comprehensive short course module for teacher at DIKSHA platform (Govt. of India (NCERT) in partnership with UNICEF)
- Module reached out to lakhs of teachers across the country for "safe WASH and IPC

Besides local efforts at State/UT levels, MoE, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), Government of India, and UNICEF collaborated at the national level for the development of training modules for teachers on COVID-19 responsive behaviour. These training modules were launched virtually on the Government's DIKSHA platform. The key objective of this virtual training module is to support, capacitate and enhance understanding of all teachers about safe WASH practices, COVID-19 appropriate behaviour, and empower them to guide implementation of WASH in Schools in context of COVID-19.



Figure 1: Screenshot of the Training module on COVID-19 Responsive Behavior course in DIKSHA platform

Key session contents include - basic information on COVID-19, safe school protocols, design principles for setting up and retrofitting in view of COVID-19, measures, checklist for ensuring safe schools, global and national best practices.

User-friendly course designs including relevant illustrations, with supported voice-over have been made available in both English and Hindi versions through the DIKSHA platform. Towards the end, the module also has a unique self-learning check with multiple-choice questions to reinforce appropriate awareness amongst the participants. At course completion, the portal generates a certificate for the participants as a mark of recognition. The links for the course modules are as below:

1. COVID-19 Responsive Behaviour (English): https://diksha.gov.in/explore-course/course/do_313318876367847424117
2. COVID-19 Responsive Behaviour (Hindi): https://diksha.gov.in/explore-course/course/do_31331883034029260815072

The COVID-19 Responsive Behaviour course module on the DIKSHA platform received an overwhelming response. The module provided a ready opportunity to reach out to millions of teachers across the country. It supplemented their capacity and skills in COVID-19 responsive WASH and IPC measures for operationalizing and accelerating safe school reopening.

Key
Learning

Standardized quality training courses on safe school priorities (WASH and IPC) during COVID-19, provides a good platform to facilitate self-paced learning and empowerment for the school community at scale.

4.2 WASH-in-Schools training toolkit for key stakeholders

Robust WASH-in-school (WinS) policy and programming has been a priority area in India since long given its interconnectedness with health and education outcomes. COVID-19 further amplified the need for strengthening these critical outcome areas for safe school reopening. Capacity building of key stakeholders emerged as a prerequisite for improved WASH and COVID-19 appropriate behaviours (CAB) at scale.

MoE and UNICEF (with technical support partner ASCI, as part of a UNILEVER partnership) took up the mammoth task of developing a comprehensive toolkit for WASH-in-Schools training including a booklet, presentations, and a facilitator's guide, with COVID-19 considerations. Customized training kits were developed for a range of stakeholders as listed below:

1. State-level decision-makers
2. Elected public representatives
3. Master trainers
4. Teachers
5. School management committee
6. Child cabinet
7. Sanitation workers

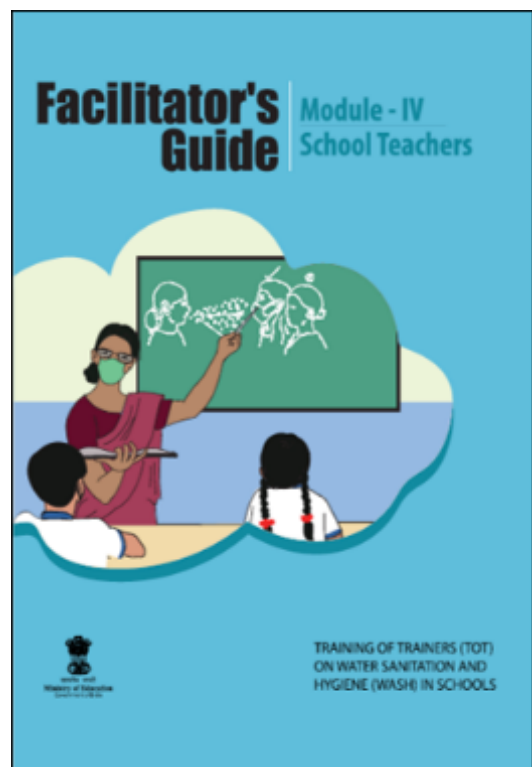


Figure 2: Screenshot of the facilitator guide for school teachers (WASH-in-Schools comprehensive training toolkit)

These training modules emphasize the importance of WinS and IPC with focus on standards and indicators, inclusiveness, addressing challenges and opportunities, roles of key stakeholders, WinS benchmarking tool (Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar), development of Swachhata Action Plan (as envisaged under Samagra Shiksha) for sustaining efforts. The training modules were shared with the States/UTs for appropriate use and enable them to undertake virtual or offline training as feasible, with appropriate customization during COVID-19. Considering the local contexts, States are utilizing these WinS training kits/resources through local UNICEF field offices and partner support for safe school reopening and sustained WASH improvements. Links to the WASH in School toolkits are given below:

English:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/19Cgix3ym9MoVctRjFzvTay064KRYD3Yw>

Hindi:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/u/0/folders/19Cgix3ym9MoVctRjFzvTay064KRYD3Yw>

Key Highlights/ Features:

Facilitators Guide (total 7) includes: - Brief about guide, brief on training, Training schedule, session plans (objective, material, learnings, references, methodology/ process), pre-and post-assessment, training evaluation, training aids, activities

Handbook: Key Learnings resource material and reference (total 7)

Presentations: Session wise support PPT slides, with visual/ video-based reference (68 PPTs in 7 modules)

Some of the associated quick outputs may be observed as:

- Tools (available with States/UTs) provide a ready opportunity to strategically involve key stakeholders for their effective role in local WinS implementation (at different levels).
- Tools are being extensively utilized in thousands of schools, for facilitating schools with 1 and 2 stars in WinS rating to upgrade in higher stars and thus showcase high WASH compliance under the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) benchmarking parameters of MoE, Government of India.

4.3 Technical designs for COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations

The pandemic exacerbated the need to focus on adherence to preventive measures to limit the spread. Since handwashing with soap at critical intervals is a key response measure, corresponding adaptations were also made in existing handwashing facilities to ensure non-touch measures and safe distancing in particular.

It was observed that while awareness on frequent handwashing for 40 seconds at critical intervals was existent, there was limited guidance available for COVID-19 sensitive handwashing station designs. These adaptations were particularly important in institutions (schools, anganwadi, health centres, etc.) and facilities in public settings where crowding was common.

UNICEF and sectoral partners realized this need in the early phase of COVID-19 spread in the country.

Accordingly, a compendium of indicative layouts, designs, and cost estimates, as a key guide for COVID-19 sensitive handwashing facility designs in different settings, was developed as a proactive emergency response.

Key Highlights/ Features:

Compendium of COVID-19: handwashing with Soap facilities, provides key guidance for contextual

- Design principles,
- Checklists, O&M priority
- Indicative designs, layouts, cost estimates

The compendium of COVID-19 handwashing with soap includes relevant guidance on aspects such as the basic principles of design, key design ideas, checklists for handwashing stations, necessary components, operation and maintenance (O&M), cost estimates, etc., to facilitate decision making for appropriate adaptation.

The following are the different models listed with their specific features:

- Handwashing unit developed by Bhopal Municipal Corporation (drum based- single person use)
- Safety handwashing station (West Singhbhum Jharkhand) with multiple (3) points, and a stainless-steel sink
- Portable multiple tap handwashing station with sheet used as drain tray (using waste tank material)
- Hands-free soap and water dispenser and foot operated handwashing station, Dibrugarh, Assam
- Push tap design (Chhattisgarh), single point facility
- Handwashing unit developed by West Central Railways, Bhopal (single point, with the scope of increasing the points)
- Prefabricated stainless steel two taps handwash unit
- Prefabricated pedal operated designs with hands-free water and soap dispenser



Figure 3: Cover page of the document, compendium of indicative layout, design and cost estimates, April 2020



Figure 4: Glimpse of few COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations designs in the compendium

These adapted designs served as a ready reference for quick up-scaling in the pandemic. Information on these designs was spread through various trainings and orientation programmes in different parts of the country. States like Odisha, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Madhya Pradesh implemented these in different local settings. Some of these designs can be effectively contextualized to school settings as well in view of COVID-19 protocols for ensuring safe handwashing with soap.

4.4 100 Days National Campaign for Piped Water Supply in Schools, Anganwadi and Ashramshalas: MoJS

Safe drinking water is a necessity and one of the primary Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Right to Education 2009, India envisages - “safe and adequate water in school”, as one of the essentials and the right of every child. Quality of water has a direct linkage with child health, cognitive development, learning ability, and overall wellbeing. During the pandemic, on October 2, 2020, Ministry of Jal Shakti (MJS) launched a 100 days campaign to ensure piped water supply in every school, anganwadi¹ and ashramshala² across the country. This national campaign initiative has been remarkable and very contextual in COVID-19 for its relevance towards children’s health, development and ensuring safe schooling for every child.

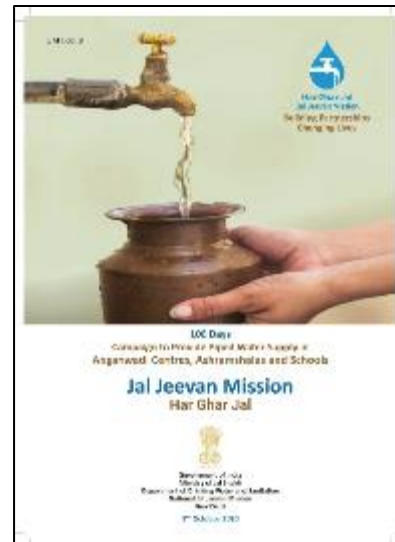


Figure 5: Guideline on 100 days campaign to provide piped water supply in Anganwadi Centres, Ashramshalas and schools, JJM

Assurance of running water in toilets not only helps children’s hygiene but motivates adolescent girls and teachers not to miss school, especially during menstruation days.

Dr Yasmin Ali Haque, Former UNICEF Representative to India

This convergent initiative involved several ministries including Jal Shakti (MoJS), Education (MoE), Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Ministry of Home affairs, and Ministry of Panchayat Raj and Rural Development (MoPRD). At the helm, the central ministries provided guidelines and directives to States/UTs besides continuous support and review of progress. A detailed guideline was prepared by the Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) with technical support from UNICEF. The following key areas were stressed in the guidelines in the context of schools:

- Provision of potable piped water supply.
- Availability of water supply for handwashing, toilet within premises and cooking of mid-day meals.
- Grey water management/ reuse and rainwater harvesting.
- O&M, water quality monitoring and surveillance.
- Engagement of partners.

UNICEF, along with its field offices, also facilitated local coordination at the State, District, and field-level with key stakeholders and government departments to ensure the best use of this opportunity for improved WASH in schools and anganwadis. UNICEF’s key areas of support included - coordination for issuing time-to-time directives, prioritizing local implementation with partners, advocacy for leveraging required resources from concerned

Key Highlights/ Features:

- 100 days campaign for ensuring piped water supply in Schools, AWC launched on October 2, 2020 (Gandhi Jayanti)
- Focus areas: piped water supply, water supply for handwashing, toilet and for cooking mid-day meals, greywater management/ reuse, rainwater harvesting,
- Campaign complementing WASH O&M and SVP

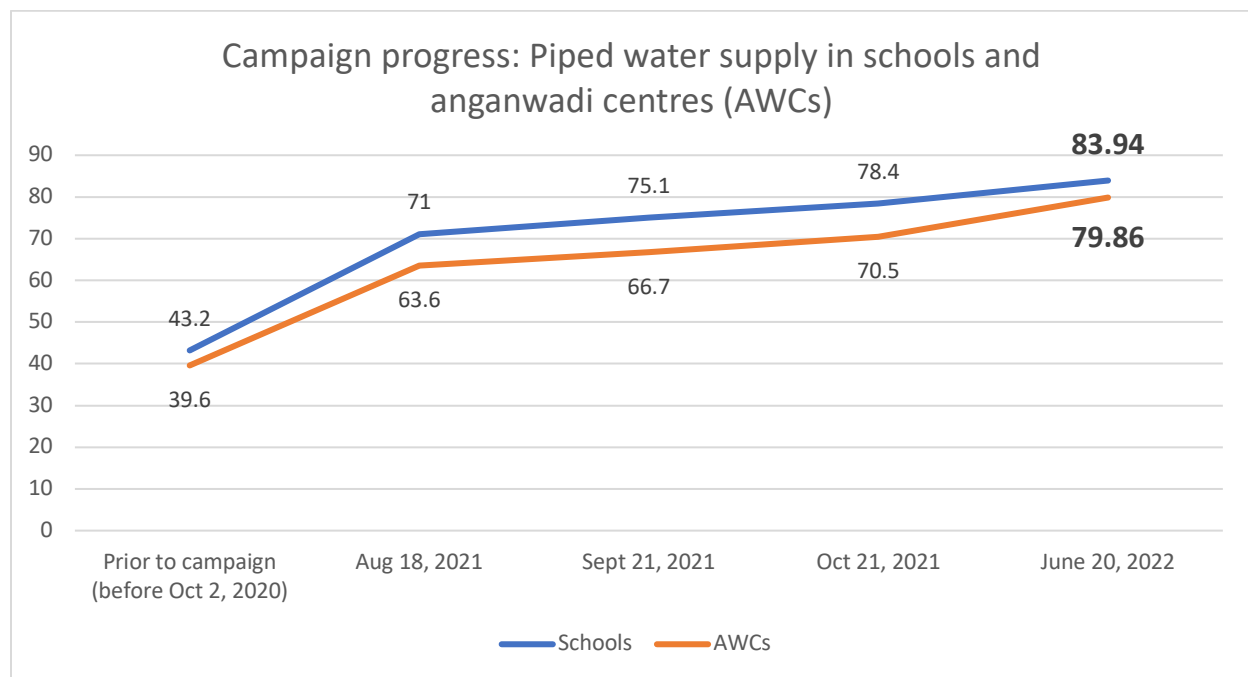
¹ Anganwadi means a courtyard shelter in English and it serves as a center for services related to early childhood care, development, hygiene and education, vaccination, maternal health and nutrition, adolescent girls counselling. Anganwadis serve as pre-schools as well.

² Ashramshalas are residential schools in remote, hard to reach areas mostly for tribal children from economically weaker sections of the society. There are separate Ashramshalas for girls and boys

programmes such as the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), the Fifteenth Finance Commission (FFC), Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), local contribution etc., and addressing sustained local O&M system.

The progress of the initiative is mapped in Figure 6. Despite implementation under pandemic related constraints, schools showed a 40.74% point increase, while anganwadis showed a 40.26 % point increase in piped water supply coverage in a short span of less than two years duration. These results were also complemented by a constant local focus on improvement in other WinS related priorities envisaged under Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar such as running water in the toilet with handwashing unit, greywater management and rainwater harvesting. The campaign made a dent in accelerating safe school reopening and achieving long term WinS outcomes.

Figure 6: Progress in coverage of piped water supply in schools and Anganwadi (as of June 20, 2022; source: JJM dashboard). [Chart not to scale in terms of time lapsed]



Good Practices from Andhra Pradesh

The good practice from Andhra Pradesh focussed on training of teachers on COVID-19 response and preparedness for safe school reopening.

4.5 COVID-19 response and preparedness training package for teachers to ensure safe school reopening

School closure during the pandemic raised concerns about consequences on children's education and their overall wellbeing. Limited capacities and preparedness among the school communities for safe school operation prolonged school reopening. This was further accentuated with the lack of vaccination protocol for children. It was well comprehended that for safe school reopening, adherence to improved WASH and IPC measures were the key. However, like other states, Andhra Pradesh also had challenges in reaching out to frontline teachers and school communities to develop their basic skills and capacities on WASH and IPC.

In this case, UNICEF extended support in developing required training package content and extended orientation support to schools across the state.

The standard training package on "safe school preparedness priorities" contained essential information and actionable guidance, with illustrations, for easy understanding in virtual mode. On May 23, 2021, UNICEF, Samagra Shiksha and SCERT, Department of Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh organized a virtual webinar for WASH and IPC measures called - "COVID-19 – Response and Preparedness, before school reopening". The key sessions in the webinar³ included:

1. Introduction - COVID-19 preparedness for schools
2. Understanding infection prevention and control
3. Measures in schools and other associated settings like home



Figure 7: Backdrop banner of the virtual webinar on COVID-19 response and preparedness (WASH and IPC in schools)

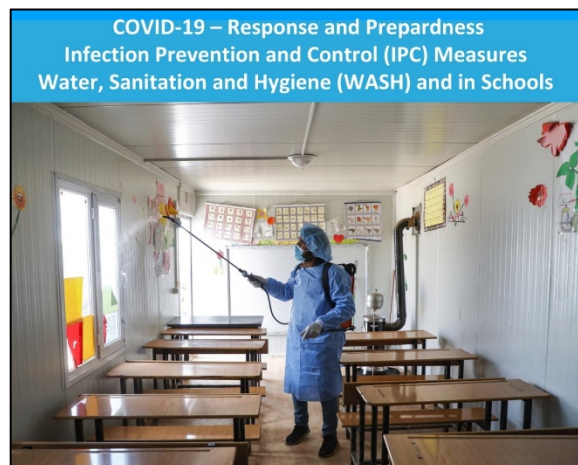


Figure 8: A slide displaying ongoing classroom sanitization, in a school, as safe school reopening measures

³ Link to training material is - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1nGAEUAHJhXqXgMU1NEAvB45GJ91JUiFc/view?usp=sharing>

- Activities at school and in-home environment for IPC (during school operations): water, personal hygiene, food hygiene, environmental cleaning, waste management, sanitation,
 - Activities when children return to school after closure
4. Guidance for COVID-19 prevention and control in schools:
- Parents/caregivers and community members,
 - School administrators, teachers and staff, students, and children,
 - Age-specific health education for different levels

Key Highlights/ Features:

- Comprehensive training material to develop local teachers' capacities on WASH and IPC in Schools (and home)
- Training package exclusively disseminated and utilized by state for COVID-19 response and preparedness initiatives at the local school level
- Content also included training modules for safe school protocols for preparedness and response in the DIKSHA online portal for access and use by the teachers

Andhra Pradesh successfully utilised this training package to reach about 170,000 headmasters and teachers across the state. This package had specific safety checklist for key stakeholders (parents/caregiver, teachers/ staff, children). The training material and YouTube link of training were widely utilized in the state to maintain the safe school checklist before school reopening.

These training modules were included in the DIKSHA platform. The State also organised a special drive to train teachers on WASH and school safety protocols (COVID-19 response and preparedness) through online training from 1st to 5th October 2021.

5 Good Practices from Bihar

The good practices from Bihar focussed on online awareness generation on COVID-19 and responsive behaviours through multi-ways like – (i) effective utilisation of existing resources like the online professional learning community of teachers (ii) multi-stakeholder engagement through social media in celebration of key events like global handwashing day, mensural hygiene day etc to raise awareness on COVID-19 responsive behaviours, WASH and IPC in schools. The State has also piloted technical designs for COVID-19 responsive handwashing stations through CSR support. Additionally, Bihar has showcased the criticality of joint-assessments in disaster management for proactive action and response through multi-sectoral linkages.

5.1 Facebook events for WASH messaging for safe school reopening

“Teachers of Bihar” is one of the largest online professional learning communities for government school teachers of Bihar and across India. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the platform proved to be most helpful to the Government and UNICEF for wider reach to generate awareness on WASH and IPC for safe school reopening. Additionally, the platform reaches the larger school community, including students, school management committees, parents, caregivers, GP/ULB members, etc. “Teachers of Bihar” community utilizes social media platforms (Facebook), to organize live Facebook events/episodes on a range of subjects and issues related to schools. They coordinate a diverse set of activities with sectoral experts on concurrent issues (with a live streaming link shared to the community members in advance).

Global Handwashing Day (15th October 2020): With its contextual significance to combat COVID-19, an interactive Facebook live session was organized with more than 3200 teachers across the State on Global Handwashing Day to generate awareness on handwashing with soap. The event provided key guidance from sectoral WASH experts with a help of an anchor and facilitated the learning, awareness and understanding of teachers and staff on best practices, sectoral updates and key COVID-19 responsive measures.

Further, an online quiz on importance of handwashing with soap was conducted in collaboration with ‘Teachers of Bihar’. A total of 14,083 members including children and teachers participated in the online quiz.



Figure 9: Teachers of Bihar, Facebook event on “Global handwashing day 2020”



Figure 10: Teachers of Bihar, Facebook event on menstrual hygiene day 2020

Menstrual Hygiene Day (28th May 2021): A weeklong campaign (25-31 May 2021) was organized across the State reaching more than 28,000 people, to celebrate Menstrual Hygiene Day. ‘Teachers of Bihar’ organised several innovative activities to reach out to teachers and children with menstrual hygiene related messages. Some of themes that were followed were:

- Break the silence and change negative social norms around MHM.
- Engage decision-makers to increase the political priority and catalyze action for MHM, at global, national, and local levels.
- Create awareness among teachers as ambassadors to promote safe menstrual hygiene.

Key Highlights/ Features:

- “Teachers of Bihar” an online professional learning community, was an instrumental platform to reach teachers on key WASH and IPC priorities during special day/week-long observations (on GHD, MHM day) during the pandemic.
- Innovative activities like live sessions with experts, online quiz, key messages dissemination, red dot challenge, competitions, poems, articles, art talks, MHM band-making etc engaged a wide variety of audience.

Key activities⁴ included - Red Dot challenge, online quiz, poem and article competition, art on MHM day, “Let’s talk on periods” – a Facebook live program, and menstrual hygiene band making.

5.2 COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations in schools through CSR support

In line with the overall COVID-19 protection protocols, wearing masks, handwashing with soap and physical distancing were key measures to prevent transmission. Although schools remained closed after March 2020, it was important to make sure that schools remain safe and were geared-up well to follow CAB at the time of reopening. This was essential to curb the spread of infection among children.



Figure 11: Group handwashing facility with COVID sensitive elbow tab installed, in a school from Patna district, Bihar

With this background, in October–December 2020, UNICEF collaborated with the Bihar Education Project Council (BEPC) to pilot COVID-19 sensitive group handwashing stations in 16 schools (both rural and urban) of Patna district.

Accordingly, a pedal operated multipoint group handwashing station with one master tap was designed. This system allowed six children to simultaneously wash their hands while maintaining physical distance. Unfortunately, this model didn’t prove to be very effective and the design was found to have sustainability concerns due to water wastage and high O&M costs. Instead of the previous pedal-based model, a revised elbow-operated tap was then successfully tested and installed. This model allowed limited physical touch and had an advantage of ease of operation with water saving features. This revised design successfully ensured safe hand hygiene, along with adherence to key COVID-19 appropriate behaviours.

⁴ A detailed report can be viewed here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1lBNr2raW7w2qHxZQiXrsNgQFQuylCjO_/view?usp=sharing

This successful pilot of 16 handwashing stations in Patna, encouraged Bihar State Educational Infrastructure Development Corporation (BSEIDC), BEPC and UNICEF for scaling up the design in other schools. The discourse resulted in leveraging INR 2.25 crores from the BSEIDC in January 2021 under their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) to construct elbow-operated hand-washing units across 300 schools in Patna district (both urban and rural). Accordingly, BECP adopted the UNICEF facilitated COVID-19 sensitive group handwashing station model, including the following features:

1. Tiled handwashing unit with a raised platform
2. Six tap connections of two different heights to accommodate children of all ages
3. Water supply tank and connections
4. Inspection chamber and soak pit for wastewater reuse and recharge
5. Wall paintings with messages for safe water, sanitation, and hygiene practices

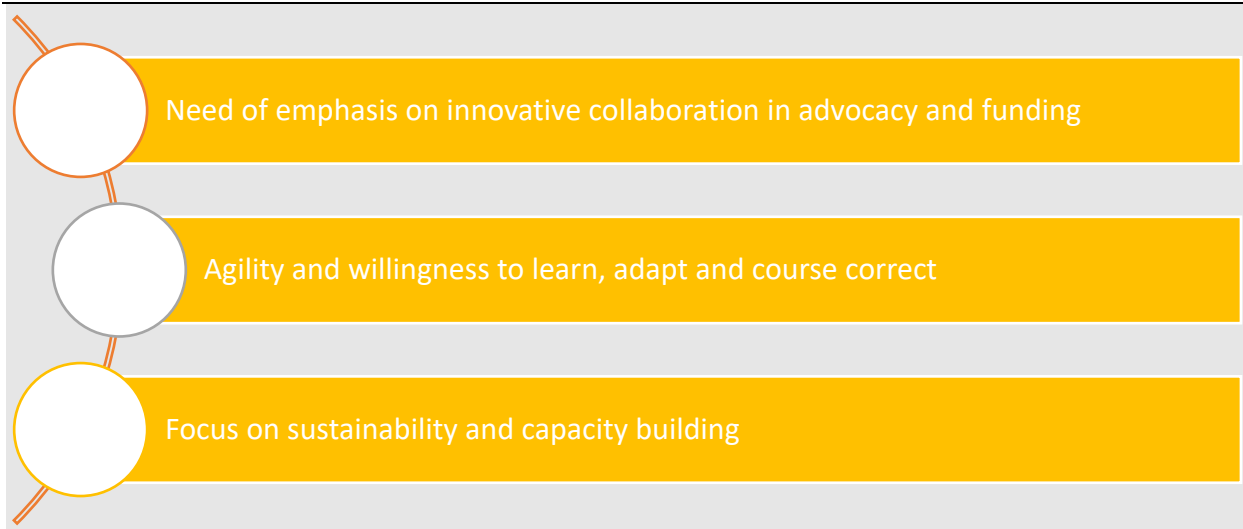
Key Highlights/ Features:

- A pilot initiative for COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations in 16 schools (learnings used in course correction and scale-up).
- COVID-19 sensitive handwashing facilities support for 330 schools, leveraged through the collaboration of the BECP, UNICEF and BSEISC.

In February 2021, UNICEF and BEPC also oriented selected engineers [12 Junior Engineers (JEs) and one Assistant Engineer (AE)] from BEPC and gave them the responsibility to facilitate the construction and functioning of the handwashing stations. These trained engineers further facilitated the installation of COVID-19 sensitive and child-friendly handwashing facilities in 300 more schools by March 2021. Furthermore, the State also prioritized actions, guidance and financing for safe school environment, O&M and sustainable use of basic hygiene facilities through measures like:

- Guidelines to ensure WASH and IPC measures for the safe reopening of schools.
- Increasing the “Swachhata Action Plan” activities provision from the school’s composite grant from 10% to 25%.

Key Learnings



5.3 Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (JRNA) 2021

Amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Bihar simultaneously also faced multi-disasters with unusual flooding in June 2021. This required relocation of thousands of families to safe places. In this background, a multi-sector Joint Rapid Need Assessment (JRNA) was conducted through the convergence of the Inter-Agency Group Bihar, UNICEF field office, Bihar, and Sphere India, with the field support from partner organizations. The basic purpose of the JRNA was to identify the urgent, mid-term, and long-term needs of the affected communities. This JRNA was conducted across the three highly flood-affected districts of East Champaran, West Champaran and Muzaffarpur.

The JRNA included different aspects of WASH as well. It included ten schools in flood-affected areas. Some of the key findings from these schools are summarised as below:

- 37% of respondents reported infrastructure damages in schools due to floods.
- Schools were either damaged, flooded or debris and silt had entered inside the school and, thus, were severely prone to the spread of several water-borne diseases.
- Drinking water sources such as wells, hand pumps, and piped water supplies had faced damages and contamination.
- With damage to drinking water and sanitation facilities in most of the schools, schools remained an unsafe place in terms of exposure to several health issues.
- It was reported that disinfection materials and equipment for CAB is a key need in schools.
- Some schools in surveyed villages were converted as shelters during floods and were also used as COVID-19 quarantine/ isolation centres earlier. They were, thus, at high risk of spreading infections.

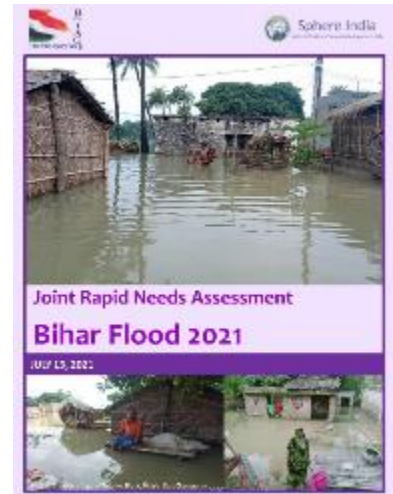


Figure 12: JRNA Bihar 2021 document



Figure 13: Flood affected schools

Accordingly, the JRNA also provided immediate, short-term, mid-term, and long-term recommendations:

Immediate Priority: Disinfection of the school, disinfection of materials and equipment with proper training, establishing safe portable drinking water points (age-appropriate), repair and restoration of water supply in toilets, reconstruction of damaged toilets, waste management, excreta disposal needs, continuous risk communication (IEC materials) for children, teaching, non-teaching staffs and community.

Short Term: Provision of handwashing facilities, establishing safe temporary learning centres and child-friendly spaces (for at least 30% of affected schools, with COVID-19 protocol), sanitization, mask, sanitizers, thermometer (IR), thorough damage assessment of school infrastructure for repair and rehabilitation, health authority visit for preventive measures.

Medium Term: Coordination for ensuring inter-sectoral linkages amongst education, WASH, food and nutrition, shelter and health, rehabilitation, and repair of school infrastructure and material.

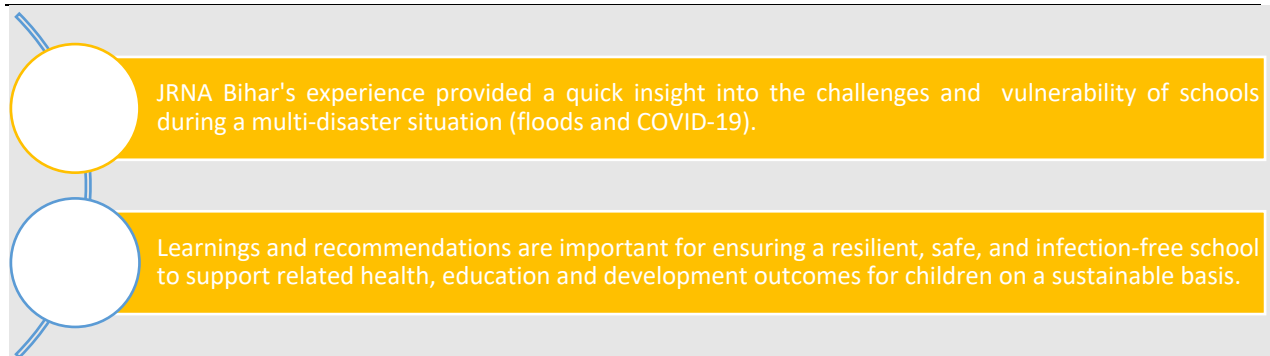
Long Term: Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) measures in school construction and having space for makeshift schools in view of the flood situation in these districts, inclusion of CAB in school safety program, inclusion of appropriate social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) strategies in “Safe Saturday” school safety program.

These findings were used to guide CSO partners in selected UNICEF districts including Purnea, Darbhanga, and Supaul, with regards to catalysing action for disinfection of hand pumps/ schools, promotion of safe school protocols including soap banks, pad banks and mask banks to support improved hygiene and CAB.

Key Highlights/ Features:

- Multisector Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (JRNA), Bihar provided some key insight of the WASH-IPC challenges and context in schools, while the State faced floods along with the COVID-19 pandemic.
- JRNA 2021 recommended a set of immediate, short-, mid- and long-term recommendations for school WASH to ensure safe schooling (including key WASH priorities).

Key Learnings



JRNA Bihar's experience provided a quick insight into the challenges and vulnerability of schools during a multi-disaster situation (floods and COVID-19).

Learnings and recommendations are important for ensuring a resilient, safe, and infection-free school to support related health, education and development outcomes for children on a sustainable basis.

6 Good Practices from Chhattisgarh

The good practices from Chhattisgarh focussed on skill and capacity building for teachers through e-learning on CAB and use of rapid assessments as a tool for evidence-based action for targeted results.

6.1 E-learning materials for teachers

Considering that safe school reopening was utmost priority, it was increasingly realised that it was important to re-skill the teachers on CAB. To address this urgent need, Swachh Bharat Mission (Rural) and UNICEF collaborated to develop an e-learning module on WASH practices in COVID-19. This brief guideline was developed keeping in mind teachers, and contained verified technical information on COVID-19 spread, and relevant preventive measures through WASH practices. The e-module⁵ content was made in both Hindi and English covering the following key areas:

- What is COVID-19
- Why WASH is important in COVID-19 response
- Children’s vulnerability facts
- Spread of COVID-19 and key barriers
- Handwashing with soap and water (with critical times) and its linkages to COVID -19, proper ways of handwashing with soap and use of sanitizers.
- How to make liquid handwash soap at home
- Physical distancing
- Mask usage and precautions during mask use
- Safe drinking water, safe use of toilet and environment hygiene
- Role of the teachers and others to fight against COVID-19



Figure 14: E learning module for teachers on WASH in Schools (during COVID -19)

E-learning material for teachers on WASH was uploaded in the Government of Chhattisgarh’s e-learning portal with a target to reach around 44,000 teachers. For wider dissemination, the e-learning material was also shared on teacher WhatsApp and Telegram groups by the School Education Department.

6.2 Rapid physical observation on school opening preparedness leading to safe schooling guidance

Schools reopened for class 11-12 in Chhattisgarh from August 2, 2021. However, CAB and functional WASH facilities remained a challenge for the school authorities, despite government’s directions and guidelines to district administrations. On request of Samagra Shiksha or the

⁵ Link to “E learning” material is - <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1hc935Sq8ra2w2QsnnSZH1NfHNYgc1KpW?usp=sharing>

Education Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, UNICEF with its field team conducted a quick physical observation in 105 schools (2-7 August 2021) to understand school preparedness based on COVID-19 safety protocols.

Districts covered: BalodaBazar, Bastar, Bilaspur, Dantewada, Janjgir-Champa, Jashpur, Kanker, Korba, Mahasamund, Mungeli, Narayanpur, Raigarh, Raipur and Rajnandgaon

Study Methodology: The Study used a Google form tool for the assessment of status on following parameters :

- Piped water supply,
- Provisions of safe drinking water,
- Functionality of toilet,
- Availability of hand washing facility and practices among children,
- School cleaning and disinfection,
- Body temperature monitoring,
- Proper use of mask,
- Maintenance of physical distancing,
- Discussion on CAB with children,
- Monitoring of CAB etc.

The rapid assessment provided readiness status on each of these parameters on a 5-point scale.

Results: The assessment showed the following results on a 5 points scale for WASH and COVID-19 preparedness measures status in covered schools:

- Satisfactory level: Understanding of CAB among teachers (3.1 points), piped water supply in schools (3.2 points) and engagement of Safai Karmi for environmental hygiene (3.5 points).
- Unsatisfactory level: Overall WASH facilities - handwashing, toilet, drinking water provisions (< 3 points), thermal scanning provision (1.2 points).

Overall, the assessment led to the conclusion that WASH indicators in schools were unsatisfactory.

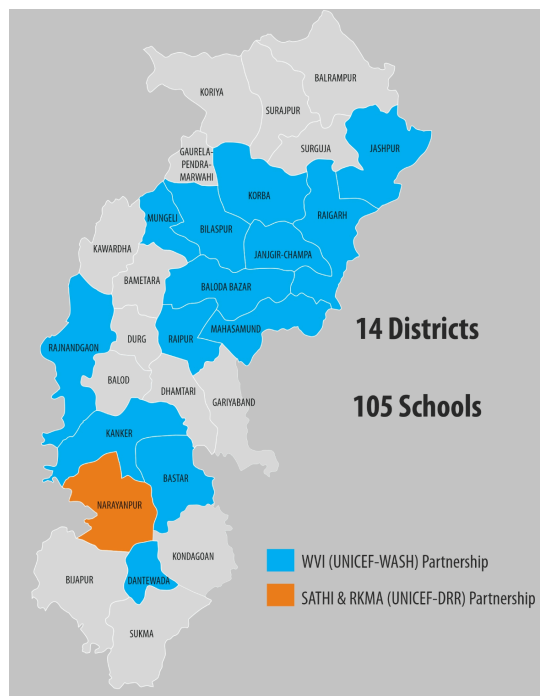


Figure 15: Districts covered under rapid physical assessment, Chhattisgarh

Overall Findings	
Indicators	All Schools
Piped Water Supply within school premises	3.2
Provisioning of drinking water	2.8
Availability of handwashing facility	2.7
Handwashing practices by children	2.6
Functional toilet facility	2.6
Engagement of Safai Karmi	3.5
School cleaning & disinfection	2.8
Body temperature monitoring	1.2
Proper use of mask	3.0
Physical distancing at all times	2.8
Discussion with children on CAB*	3.1
Monitoring of CAB* by teachers	3.1
14 Districts Cumulative Score	2.8

Figure 15: Overall findings of rapid physical assessment for key WASH and COVID preparedness and response indicators for 14 districts

Result based action: Based on the results, Government of Chhattisgarh provided necessary direction to all districts covering 56303 schools. Assessment findings along with a quick checklist for safe school assessment were shared with the schools. Key directions and suggestions from State government to district included:

- Regular sensitization of teachers and children on CAB
- Strengthening handwashing facility and practices among children
- Follow up of 100 days piped water scheme campaign under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to cover all schools with piped water supply
- Effective utilization of composite funds on school safety protocol maintenance
- Consistent monitoring of school safety protocol with real time data

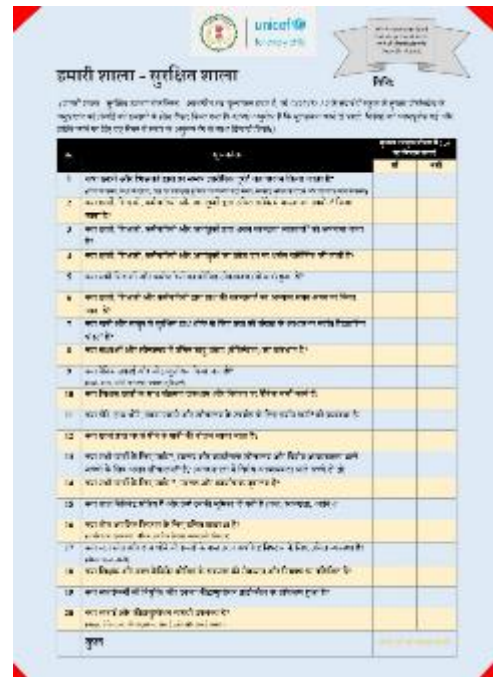


Figure 16: Rapid physical assessment tool for safe school reopening

Key Learnings

Evidence based learning guides policy and programming more accurately with targeted actions

Use a pre-patterned formats like the safe school checklist increases regular monitoring as a habitual practice for improved implementation

7 Good Practices from Gujarat

The good practices in Gujarat focussed on development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for school reopening; development of localised and contextualised IEC materials which supported the SOP implementation; mobile-based training app for teachers' capacity enhancement on CAB for school reopening; and strategies for involvement of children and leveraging their support in the school reopening process by recognising them as credible partners and change-makers.

7.1 Development of SOPs for safe school reopening

The pandemic adversely affected the learning of children across the country. Amid resurgence of COVID-19 waves, lack of vaccination for children, possible risk of spread of COVID-19 and lack of school's preparedness on WASH, parents were apprehensive in sending their children to school. However, school reopening is inevitable as children are losing their precious learning time and the scope of accessing online education across different socio-economic groups/ regions is limited. Furthermore, in the absence of physical learning at school several other related developmental outcomes around health, nutrition, WASH, MHM and equity are also getting compromised for children.

School safety planning, capacity enhancement of school level stakeholders and COVID-19 readiness at a large scale are the need of the hour.

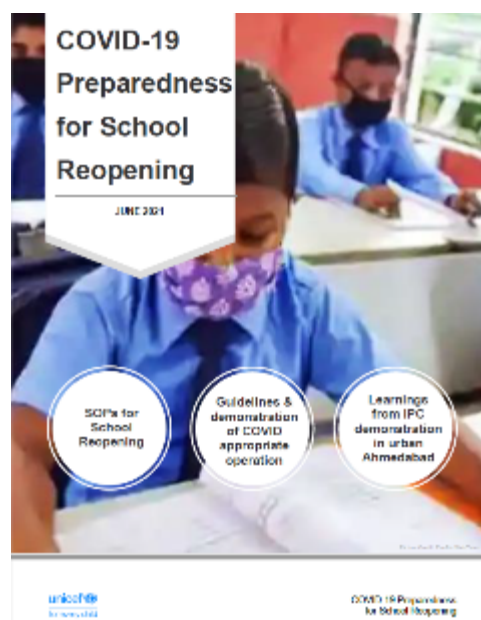


Figure 17: COVID-19 Preparedness for School Reopening Guidelines

Considering children's safety, Government of Gujarat developed an SOP for school reopening⁶, with technical support from UNICEF. The SOP developed covered the following aspects:

- Clear guidance for WASH and IPC related safe school reopening protocols through a checklist tool for (i) measures required before re-opening schools and (ii) measures required after re-opening schools. The two checklists further have defined sections as per key stakeholders for (a) at school level covering teacher, student, staff and (b) parents, guardians and students
- IEC resource package for Risk Communication: 23 detailed IEC resource materials were systematically developed and tested with inputs from experts, local practitioners, including feedback from students, teachers and staff. The field testings found a good recall rate of around 60-70%. These set of tested, unique and localized IEC resources were made part of the SOP document to support implementation of checklists and ensure adherence to CAB.



Figure 18: IEC on mask use (Gujarati)

Through UNICEF's partnership with All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), the SOP was field tested in local urban Ahmedabad schools (primarily serving the underprivileged community) on key checklists and IEC tools.

With UNICEF's technical support, Samagra Shiksha, Gujarat used these SOPs and the associated checklists for state-wide virtual trainings in orienting districts/block education officials, teachers, headmasters across all 33 districts on safe school reopening. This SOP has been widely referred to and used at all levels across the State.

Key Learnings

Clearly defined SOPs, based on national, sectoral guidance, informed by field piloting helped in building capacities for local risk resilience at scale with higher post-training adaptation at the local level.

7.2 Digital Training modules to connect with 200,000 teachers

⁶ Google Link to SOP- https://drive.google.com/file/d/1uN2sP2qTw9iTJ_v0r0Zyk9WY1rFh-tol/view?usp=sharing

The Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) of the MoE defines the essential package for WASH in schools under five categories – (i) drinking water; (ii) toilets; (iii) handwashing with soap; (iv) O&M; and (v) behaviour change and capacity building for WASH in schools. The schools are assessed based on performance on 39 WASH indicators and the performance is then rated from 1 star to 5 star. Gujarat’s WASH compliance in schools was recognized through SVP awards nationally. But the challenge during the pandemic was with regards to the process of data collection and indicators used as they were not reflective of finer qualitative aspects of WASH in schools which had emerged as key concern areas in COVID-19 as listed below:

- Adequacy and quality of WASH facilities in schools
- O&M
- Behaviour change and actual usage of WASH facilities in schools.

To address this data gap and improve COVID-19 responsive programming, UNICEF in partnership with ASCI developed the Shala Swachhta Gunak (SSG) program. SSG is a real-time WASH benchmarking and capacity building program. Under SSG e-application, e-modules⁷ on WASH and COVID-19 were developed for teachers training and disseminated across 33 districts. The e-modules were launched on 5th August 2020.

A virtual orientation on the SSG mobile application-based training modules was organised on 14th August 2020 for teachers, block resource coordinators (BRC), cluster resource coordinators (CRC), and principals across the state. Samagra Shiksha issued a directive on 17th August 2020, advising all the district education officers to ensure that the teachers in their respective areas should complete these training modules through their mobile phones. Post-training, teachers received a certificate on module completion as recognition and further motivation to adopt CAB at home and at school reopening.

These efforts complemented the ongoing Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya initiative, under which schools self-register for ‘Clean School Awards’ and aspire for 5-star benchmark. This benchmarking also acted as a base for the School Swachhata Action Plan (SAP).

Some of the key achievements of the State are as follows:

- 165,000 teachers, BRCs, CRCs and principals from 33 districts actively participated in the virtual training through use of SSG platform to take up the course module on safe school with WASH and CAB.



Figure 19: Virtual orientation on SSG mobile application-based training module



Figure 20: Certificate of COVID-19 response

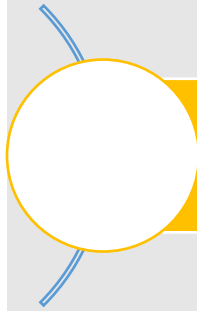


Figure 21: Certificate- WASH Champion

⁷ Module’s Link -https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AnSxh_XLvd_Qo3WtVWILRMrMxcw4yt-n?usp=sharing

- By October 2020, the SSG app informed a remarkable reach of the initiative towards safe school reopening preparedness. Key achievements are as follows:
 - 218,929 teachers (87.3%) completed the digital COVID-19 module
 - 198,331 teachers (79.1%) completed WASH in School module
 - 39,242 (96.6%) schools completed the baseline survey in SSG, to support their school Swachhata Action Plan (SAP) efforts

Key Learnings



Mobile-based App such as SSG can be leveraged at scale, to extend continued support to the school community (teachers) for both capacity building and situation assessment in ensuring sustained WASH- IPC services school.

7.3 Children-led situation assessment of school's hand hygiene indicators on Global Handwashing Day (GHD) 2021

Evidence across the world suggests a positive correlation between adoption of improved handwashing practices and health, resulting in prevention of key childhood diseases like diarrhoea, respiratory infections, pneumonia, etc. Good health outcomes ultimately affects education outcomes in terms of reduced absenteeism and drop out, and improved nutritional outcomes. Although handwashing with soap at critical intervals was already a priority intervention area across the world, COVID-19 further accentuated its importance in all social settings, including schools as a key measure for children's safety.

In this context, MoE's SOP for health and safety protocols for reopening of schools issued in October 2020, strongly recommended the need for mandatory handwashing with soap at regular intervals as one of the key preventive measures for COVID-19.

Samagra Shiksha, Gujarat, with technical support from UNICEF utilized the Global Handwashing Day 2021 (GHD 2021) as an opportunity for creative and active participation of children across the State for assessment of safe hand hygiene situation along with range of other awareness activities on handwashing.

GHD 2021 had a global theme - 'Our Future is at Hand – Let's Move Forward Together'. In Gujarat, on 18th of October 2021, a remarkable 85% of the schools participated in GHD 2021. It is estimated that a whopping number of 503,688 children (53% girls), participated from across 46,419 schools in GHD related events. Several activities were undertaken by the school children and school community at large:

- Assessment on key handwashing indicators by children
- Hand washing demonstrations
- Establishment of soap banks
- Availability of IEC near hand washing station
- Collective resolutions for handwashing

Assessment: Situation assessment⁸ for handwashing facilities was conducted by 85% (46,419) schools. Child cabinets led the assessment and marked existing handwashing infrastructure and behavior on 10 assessment indicators. Observations from this assessment were insightful to understand COVID-19 response and readiness in handwashing infrastructure at schools. It also highlighted pertinent gaps and guided immediate action areas for streamlining CAB in schools. Some of the vital observations that emerged from the assessment are summarized below:

- 97% of schools had adequate functional handwashing taps for students (1 tap for 10 students)
- All (100%) schools-maintained cleanliness around the handwashing facility
- All (100%) schools – have handwashing stations with a continued supply of running water
- All (100%) schools, with handwashing stations always have availability of soap
- 76% of schools, with handwashing stations having height and age-appropriate water taps for children
- 64% of schools with handwashing stations accessible to children with special needs.

⁸ Link to detailed assessment report - <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wMsuD25CDv5T9P13jVY16i9X0i2B00jx/view?usp=sharing> (includes both state and district-wise status on the assessment indicators).

- 98% of schools with all children wash hands with soap before the meal and after toilet use
- 90% of schools with children wash hands with soap before entering the class considering COVID-19 prevention
- 94% of schools with IEC (posters/ paintings/signages) available for promoting handwashing near handwashing station
- 97% of schools with wastewater from handwashing stations, dispose of wastewater safely without any waterlogging around

The assessment resulted in indicating noteworthy performance on key indicators such as access to adequate and functional handwashing facility, and adequate supplies such as - soap and running water. Additionally, it identified priority areas for future action such as child-friendliness of WASH infrastructure and availability/access of WASH infrastructure for children with special needs.

Soap Banks: Soap banks were established in 77% (41,974 schools) on GHD 2021. Children, through the established institution of Child Cabinets at schools played a key role in the development and management of soap banks at schools. They also created awareness about hand hygiene at school level through meetings and interactions. Students, teachers, parents, members of the community, guests coming to school were encouraged to donate soap. Swachhata kit items provided by Samagra Shiksha were also used under soap bank.

Resolution for handwashing: The Child Cabinet meeting facilitated the schools' collective resolution on adoption of COVID-19 Appropriate Behavior (CAB) and regular handwashing with soap.

UNICEF team's field interaction at Dhuvav Kanya Shala in Jamnagar on 18 October 2021, also observed inauguration of newly constructed touch-free (pedal operated) handwashing station (through CSR Support), inauguration of soap bank, interaction with children, selfie point, pledge corner, etc.

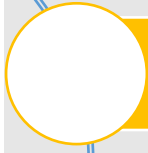


Figure 22: Soap Bank initiative, in a school, Vadodara



Figure 23: GHD Observation, in a school, Jamnagar

Key Learnings



Special days such as GHD, provide a ready platform, to mobilize the school community towards WASH-IPC priorities in schools.



School children (child cabinet) with assistance from teachers, can effectively facilitate monitoring, advocacy, planning, action, and institutionalization of WASH measures in schools

8 Good Practices from Jharkhand

The good practices from Jharkhand focussed on IEC and social behaviour change and communication strategies for the dissemination of information on CAB and related WASH and IPC practices; early interventions to develop SOPs for school reopening in vernacular and its effective dissemination for quicker implementation; and teachers training through online mode to equip them with COVID-19 related protocols for safe school reopening.

8.1 Apni Suraksha Apne Hath (Self safety is in your own Hands)

The Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Government of Jharkhand, with technical support of UNICEF, celebrated the World Water Day, through a special campaign called “Apni Suraksha Apne Hath (ASAH)” from 19th to 25th March 2021. The target audience for awareness generation was school children, teachers, school management committee (SMC), Saraswati Vahini Members and community members. The key objective of the campaign was to promote CAB throughout the state with the following areas of focus:

- Raise awareness among community and children on hand hygiene/ hand washing practice and COVID-19 appropriate behavior and enforcement of such practices.
- Create an enabling environment to adopt CAB through collaboration and partnerships in the state.
- Promote hand hygiene through demonstrations for sustained hygiene practices
- Promote food hygiene during Mid-day meal to prevent transmission risk
- Promote water conservation and environmental cleanliness at school and village level

Apni Suraksha Apne Hath campaign with key CAB messages, complemented safe schooling efforts along with earlier state-specific initiatives such as SOP for school reopening, wide-scale teacher's capacity building on COVID-19 IPC and WASH Champion with digital certification etc.

The Campaign observed a range of planned activities such as launching IEC materials and its dissemination through the mobile van, media coverage, engagement of teachers through *Guru Gosthi*, student's participation through child cabinet, *Jal Sena* etc., *Lok Wachan* through *Sandhya Choupal*, public addresses by influential persons and officials.



Figure 24: Flagging off of the Apni Suraksha Apne Hath campaign mobile van from a district Headquarter

The IEC mobile van was flagged off from State and district level for awareness generation and wider dissemination. The mobile van was equipped with banners and audio-visual display of IEC messages to generate awareness at school level. Eight different categories of IEC posters were distributed to each school which had reopened. The community members were made aware of

the key campaign messages through display of all the IEC posters. A day-wise program was observed as per the following schedule:

March 19, 2021: State level orientation program of district officials on the campaign.

March 20, 2021: District-level orientation, strategy, and action plan formulation including route plan of the van to schools; roles and responsibilities for IEC material distribution etc. This was done after taking the consent of the District Magistrates and other officials keeping in mind the COVID-19 protocols.

I am delighted to see the tremendous success of state-wide campaign *Apni Suraksha Apne Hath* from 19th -25th March 2021 with an objective to promote COVID appropriate behaviour (CAB) among all the citizens by raising awareness especially among school children, teachers, and community members.

**Mr. Hemant Soren,
Honourable Chief Minister, Government of Jharkhand**

March 22, 2021: Flag off of publicity vans at the State and district levels. The State level van was flagged off by the Honourable Chief Minister of Jharkhand, Sri Hemant Soren, from Jharkhand Assembly Complex at Ranchi in the presence of Secretary, School Education and Literacy Department, Jharkhand, Chief Field Office, UNICEF and partner organizations' representatives. This ensured high level of engagement and visibility for the campaign from the top level which percolated down till the district level and below.

The district-level flag off was conducted in the presence of senior district level officials including Deputy Commissioners, Deputy Development Commissioner, District Education Officers, and Additional District Project Officers in various districts. After the flag off by district officials, the IEC mobile van moved in across districts for covering maximum schools and spreading the campaign message through audio-visual clips.

March 23, 2021: Demonstration and distribution of promotional and publicity materials, through Guru Goshti i.e. block-level meetings where all the teachers got oriented on the importance of the campaign and the day-wise activities to be planned in their respective schools with intended stakeholders.

March 24, 2021: Campaign sensitization/ awareness activities were conducted in around 14000 reopened schools through active engagement of Child Cabinet, Jal Sena, Peer groups, Eco Clubs, teachers, MDM cooks, and SMC members. The key activities included – nukkad nataks (street plays), dramas, handwashing steps demonstration, painting, and slogan competitions campaign, etc.

March 25, 2021: Organizing “Sandhya Chaupal” at villages in each district, demonstration of publicity materials through *Lokvachan* (public reading), handwashing demonstration by children, nodal teachers’ public address on key COVID-19 behaviours including the importance of water conservation, various competitions, prize distribution, oath-taking for "Apni Suraksha Apne Hath". These



Figure 25: Apne Hath campaign mobile van in a school, engaging students, teachers in demonstration of recommended hand hygiene steps

meetings also had an encouraging presence of key departmental officials.

Altogether, the campaign had a wide reach to 24 districts, 263 blocks, covering 14,251 schools in Jharkhand state. Associated reach included 24 flag off and district level activities, 260 Guru Goshtis (18,528 teachers participated), 12,403 schools’ participation in different activities, 110322 children participation in painting and essay writing, 10026 Sandhya Chaupals in school vicinity, participation of 220892 people in Lok Vachan (Oath taking) ceremony.

Follow up measures on some of the ASAH activities that were taken are listed below:

- To sustain the activities carried out in ASAH, districts utilised the IEC materials distributed during the campaign to promote hygiene safety measures at schools. The campaign messages and activities have been made part of the WASH Toolkit trainings that are ongoing to develop Master Trainers at state and district level. The key activities and messages of ASAH campaign are being reinforced through capacity building of the concerned stakeholders like teachers, SMC members, child cabinets, PRI members at the district and school level. Focused approaches, measures and follow-ups are proving effective to promote and improve key WASH and CAB behaviours among key stakeholders.
- A similar week-long campaign was also planned in March 2022 in coordination with DoSE&L, Jharkhand where WASH in Schools, COVID-19 IPC etc were an integral part of the SBCC campaign conducted for WinS and SVP participation. This resulted in improved safety measures and WASH facilities in schools. Efforts are now forthcoming to adopt similar strategy of awareness dissemination through IEC mobile vans and SBCC activities during celebration of important days like Environment Day, World Water Day, MHM Day, Swachhta Pakhwada and other programmes throughout the year.

8.2 SoPs for Safe school Operations (Hindi)

Jharkhand has significant rural area and remote regions with limited scope for online education owing to poor mobile reach and connectivity. Thus, safe school reopening became a critical priority for the State government to avoid disruption of learning amongst its young population. School Education and Literacy Department, Government of Jharkhand was struggling with continued education through schools as many schools were also serving as quarantine centers. Given the mammoth task of reopening schools there was a need for a State-wide plan with standard operating procedures. UNICEF extended technical support to develop state-specific standard operation procedures (SOPs) for school reopening with a specific focus on WASH and IPC in schools. Jharkhand was one of the few states that developed State-specific SOP early-on during the lockdown. The SOP was launched at state level in the presence of Secretary, DoSE&L with the participation of district level officials and teachers in an online webinar to create the requisite buy-in from all levels for effective implementation.

State SOP⁹ was used by the school community (teachers, students, SMC, parents, caregivers, etc). It provided a set of guidelines to be followed for prevention of COVID-19 spread with strategies on key protective measures and actionable points. Depending on the need, the measures were categorized into 3 categories – before, during, and after school re-opening. Altogether, the SOP envisaged to help schools in implementing and communicating social and personal hygiene behaviours, and putting in place a set of required protocols for ensuring hygienic and sanitized school premises.

The key areas elaborated in the SOP includes – objective, principles, background, information about COVID-19 and its spread and preventive measures, role of key stakeholders, focus areas under different heads like water, toilet, kitchen and mid-day meals, solid and liquid waste management, menstrual hygiene management, maintenance needs (daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly, quarterly/ seasonal and annual), guidance for residential schools.

The SOP also included a special section on components of school-based hygiene behaviours change, monitoring etc. For ease of understanding, the SOP linked the measures with the corresponding outputs. Towards the end, the SOP also includes a set of IEC materials as reference.

The SOP (in Hindi) served as key guiding document for various training for creating safe schools in Jharkhand, besides serving as a unique reference for 45596 schools across the state. The guidelines given under the State SOP are integrated in the Swachhata Action Plan prepared by schools to ensure COVID-19 IPC measures. Earlier, these Swachhata Action Plan were prepared



Figure 26: Glimpse of the Hindi SOP (in view of COVID-19, Jharkhand)

⁹ Link to SOP: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fJExZBrLVlk4f6RYuxCKR3S_tfqRJUx/view?usp=sharing

based on 39 indicators of WinS. However, with the launch of the State SOP, an additional indicator on COVID-19 IPC measures at school level has been added in the SAP format to identify the gaps and sources to fulfil school safety requirements. Amid COVID-19 shutdown, schools were filling these action plan through Google formats. The Swachhata Action Plans prepared by schools are integrated in School Development Plan (SDP) and in Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) to ensure fund convergence for better WASH and COVID-19 safety facilities at schools.

8.3 Teachers training as WASH Champions

Given the high relevance of WASH and COVID-19 safety protocols under safe school programmes, the State realized a strong need to prioritize capacity development/sensitization of teachers and staff during the 2020 school closure. Reaching a sizable number of teachers in a short time was a challenge within the lockdown period.

UNICEF technically supported the State in developing state-level SOPs for school reopening. To further ensure comprehensive standard reorientation, UNICEF extended technical support to the state government for capacity development under the State program - Swachh Vidyalaya Swasth Bachhe (SVSB) application. SVSB had been in use in the state for WinS benchmarking for the last few years. UNICEF in partnership with ASCI facilitated the development of two course modules and embedding these in SVSB App. UNICEF accordingly facilitated the orientation and follow-up of use of these training modules for timely completion to accelerate the school reopening process.

During the perusal of the course by teachers, UNICEF (through its partners ASCI) also supported the required redressal system through a dedicated phone line and email service.



Figure 27: Virtual Training Program for COVID-19 response and WASH in Schools, 2020



Figure 28: Sample certificate for teachers, for completion of COVID-19 response module through SVSB App

“So far more than 1.5 lakh teachers have been certified and the process is going on for both government and private schools. This process would certainly capacitate the teachers to take initiatives at their level for the school protection against COVID-19. This initiative is dedicated to the protection and security of the students in the schools.”

**Dr. Shailesh Kumar Chourasia, IAS,
State Project Director, JEPC, Jharkhand**



Figure 29: Local media coverage for COVID preparedness and response training must for teachers, before school reopening in Jharkhand

The State has ensured universal orientation of more than 1.40 lakh teachers on the two digital courses across the State with certification as 'WASH Champion'. Simultaneously, webinars and virtual orientations were carried out to keep the momentum of WASH in schools going during lockdown. The activities had an outreach of nearly 40,000 school-related stakeholders online. Considering the success of these initiatives state government is also planning to roll out similar virtual trainings for private schools, SMCs and child cabinets, etc.

9 Good Practices in Karnataka

The good practices in Karnataka focussed on evidence-based planning and prioritisation of actions in emergency situations through the help of assessments and targeted training of relevant stakeholders to help build their capacities for implementation of planned actions.

9.1 School readiness assessment and training of stakeholders

In the wake of COVID-19 and safe school reopening, capacity building of key stakeholders like teachers, school management committee, principals etc on WASH, COVID-19 response and readiness emerged as a strategic priority. Samagra Shiksha Karnataka, UNICEF and Centre for Environment Education (CEE) jointly organized orientation of key stakeholders on July 12, 2021. A safe school preparedness assessment was also conducted on key parameters to understand the context and address the key issues.

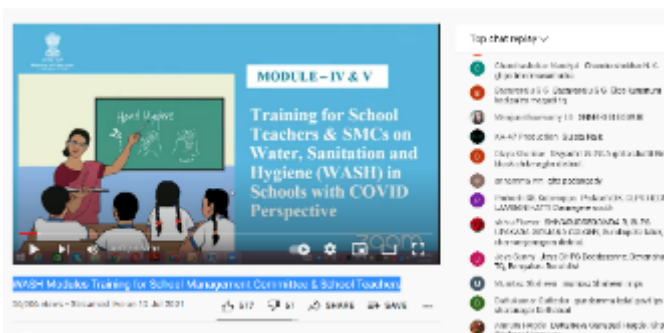


Figure 30: Online training of Teacher and SMCs on WASH in school, with COVID-19 perspective

For the capacity building of stakeholders, modules of WinS training kit package were used. These modules were developed jointly by MoE, GoI and UNICEF (with ASCI as technical partner). These specific initiatives observed an active participation of key stakeholders. The , expert resource persons were engaging and made the sessions interesting through illustrative and interactive sessions on WASH and COVID-19. This trainings successfully reached to 6110 participants (4347 teachers, 1668 Headmasters, 42 SMC members and 53 district officials) across Karnataka. Later, all comprehensive modules and concerned videos were shared with the participants for future use.

Alongside training, a survey was conducted (through Google forms) on 20 key WASH and safe school protocol indicators in 6619 schools indicating the schools readiness status under three broad areas as defined below:

1. General WASH Indicators (Part of WASH in School, Swachh Vidyalaya priorities):

Status of access to the key WASH services is reflected in the following graph (Figure 32):

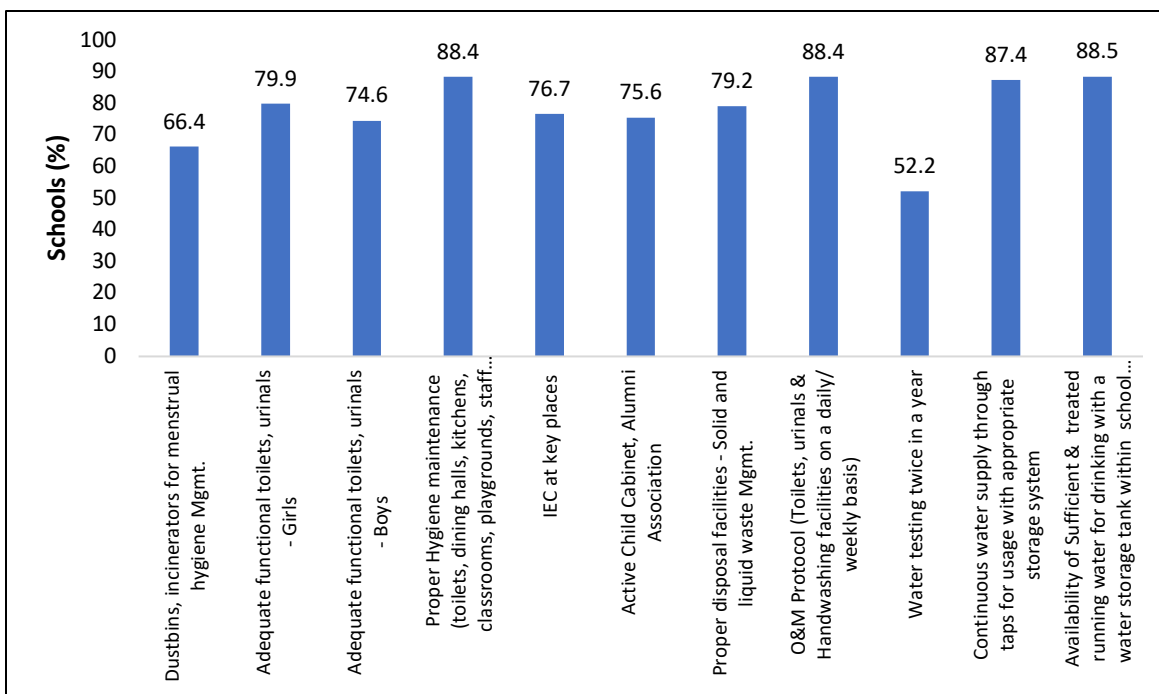


Figure 31: Status of WASH and IPC measures, Karnataka, (6619 Schools), July 2021

The survey highlighted that, in view of COVID-19, a good proportion of schools need to improve access to following WASH provisions/ services -

- 11.5% schools need to improve access to water
- 20% schools need to ensure proper sanitation facilities for girls
- 48% school to focus on water quality testing twice a year
- 25% schools to ensure proper sanitation facilities for boys
- 33% schools may need to improve access to proper menstrual hygiene management facilities
- 23% schools require additional focus on IEC messages
- 21% schools need to improve solid liquid waste management

2. Status on hand hygiene indicators

Status on key hand hygiene indicators is presented in Figure 33 :

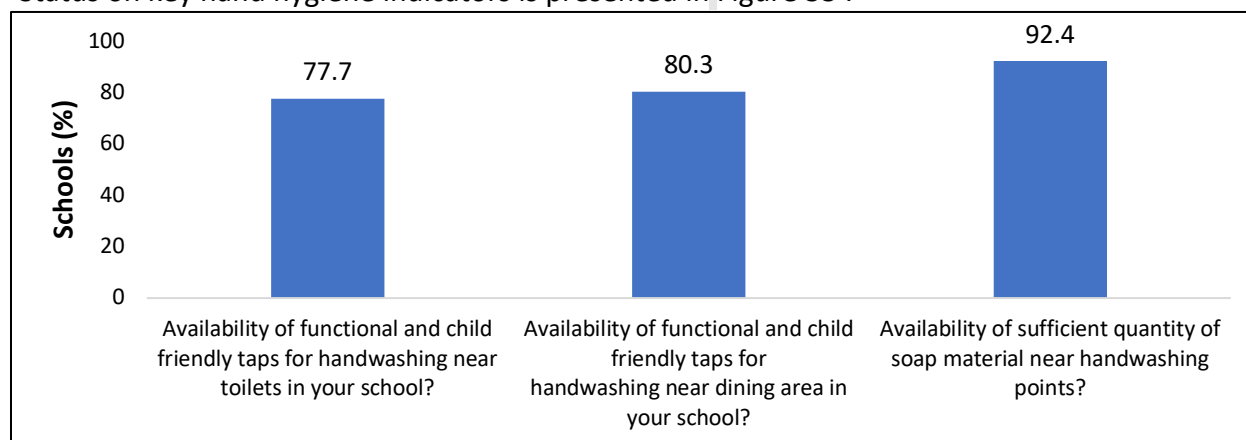


Figure 32: Status of hand hygiene facilities Karnataka, (6619 Schools), July 2021

- 22% of the schools need to improve access to functional handwashing points near toilet

- 20% of the schools require to improve access to functional handwashing points near the dining area for handwashing before mid-day meal/ lunch.

3. Status on additional information COVID-19 Indicators:

Status on key COVID-19 indicators is represented in Figure 34:

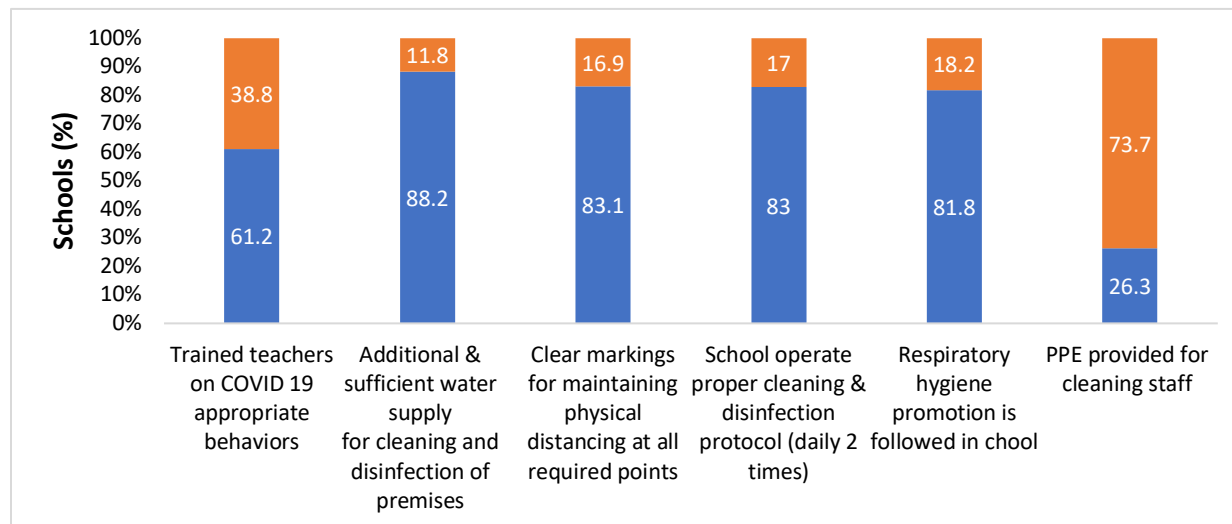


Figure 33: Status of COVID-19 Preparedness Indicators, Karnataka, (6619 Schools), July 2021

The status on the key COVID-19 preparedness indicator reflects that:

- About 39% schools need to further ensure that teachers are trained on COVID-19 preparedness and response
- 74% of the schools need to ensure PPE for the cleaning staff at schools

Thus, training and assessment highlighted the following:

- Schools lacking water supply need to be addressed through Rural Water Supply Department in the ongoing Jal Jeevan Mission Campaign.
- Quick assessment for planning IPC and WASH measures during COVID-19 at school level provided quick context to address the issues on priorities.
- Upcoming Gram Panchayat Develop Plans (GPDP) can ensure facilities as per norms in the schools through channelizing 15th Finance Commission and other funds.
- IEC materials on key hygiene behaviors and CAB need further dissemination and use.
- Schools need to address/ prioritize regular environmental sanitation apart from CAB such as social distancing etc.
- Ensure hand washing stations at all critical places for safe reopening of schools. CSR support can be helpful in this regard.
- Convergence with concerned line departments is required to address the gap and accelerate safe school reopening.
- Safe school protocols guidance from the State in local language with school-level regular monitoring on these protocols is critical.

10 Good Practices from Madhya Pradesh

The good practices in Madhya Pradesh focussed on facilitating information and knowledge on technical aspects related to COVID-19 compliant handwashing unit designs for faster replication and scalability across schools and anganwadi centers; involvement of children as key stakeholders in the process and its impact on achieving catalytic change and; importance of celebrating important milestone days as a entry-way for mass-scale awareness generation around CAB.

10.1 COVID-19 sensitive handwashing units

The COVID-19 contagion highlighted the overall need for capacity development and technology enhancement to face the new challenge and maintain a safe environment for all, especially school children. Against this background, various trainings and orientations were conducted by the line government departments, sector partners, CSOs, and volunteers to develop local capacities and address the challenges posed by COVID-19 in different settings. The UNICEF field office provided technical assistance to the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM(G)], for capacity development of district and block-level officers, and 21,000 swachhagrahis at the field level. These key frontline stakeholders and swachhagrahis, were equipped with necessary resources to further engage with the community and institutions (schools, anganwadi centres, etc.) to ensure adherence to COVID-19 appropriate behaviours (CAB).



Figure 34: COVID-19 sensitive handwashing unit installed in a school

A compendium of handwashing with soap was developed by UNICEF, which included various COVID-19 sensitive handwashing station designs, layouts and cost estimates, and was circulated by the related government department amongst the trainees. With constant follow-ups, the trained swachhagrahis, in coordination with various government departments such as that for panchayat and rural development, panchayati raj institutions, education and health, facilitated the installation of a significant number of 12,898 handwashing units across the state. Funding for the COVID-19 compliant handwashing stations was sought through convergence from key schemes like MGNREGS, 15th Finance Commission, and SBM(G), amongst others.

The compendium provides a glimpse of the work undertaken in different settings for COVID-19 sensitive handwashing facilities in Madhya Pradesh, with information on key features such as cost and usability. This document also refers to four specific types of handwashing units in schools – (i) a pedal-operated handwashing unit in Madla, (ii) Tippy Tap in Dhar, (iii) a multitap handwashing unit in Betul, and (iv) a multi-tap circular handwashing unit in Alirajpur. The compendium can be assessed at-



Figure 35: Handwashing with soap in a school in Nalcha block in Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ckQ3YUa3te2h4FtruXccBI74UvD2YOibQ/view?usp=sharing>. It is a ready reference tool for the school community to learn and replicate models for improving local access to COVID-19 sensitive handwashing facilities such that schools and anganwadi centres may adapt and advocate a suitable model as per their context.

10.2 School Swachhata Pakhwada (Sanitation Fortnight)

In Madhya Pradesh, class sixth to eighth were reopened from 1st September, 2021. After the long closure of around sixteen months, observance of the Swachhata Pakhwada (Sanitation Fortnight) provided the most appropriate platform for the reopening of schools. Although the State had been observing the event every year since 2016, Swachhata Pakhwada 2021 (1st -15th September) became even more important given that safe sanitation and hygiene practices were among the key measures to curb the spread of the pandemic, and were essential tools for safe school reopening. The State Education Department, with active support from UNICEF, observed a range of activities in accordance with the guidance from the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The diverse activities, duly acknowledged the role of children and communities in creating a safe environment.

The 2021 celebrations centred on CAB and IPC protocols for teachers, government functionaries, local leaders, and children, with a special focus on handwashing with soap, mask use and physical distancing. Several participatory day-to-day activities that were covered in the Pakhwada are listed below:

- Swachhata Shapath (Sanitation Oath)
- Awareness on the importance of handwashing with



The Maharani Laxmibai Government Girls' Higher Secondary School, Satna, celebrated 100 years of establishment and carried out all activities (led by school-going girls!) under the Swachhata Pakhwada with its letter and spirit. The school is an apostle in the city for its 'no to plastic' views and follow-up of CAB, including vaccination drives.

Figure 36: Principal demonstrating steps of hand washing at Laxmi Bai Girls School, Satna, Madhya Pradesh

soap (including steps and critical times for handwashing), personal hygiene, and maintaining hygiene and sanitation at school as well as at home.

- 'Green School Drive' to prompt the inquisitive and innovative mindset of children as they were encouraged to develop slogans, posters, and pamphlets on themes such as CAB, water conservation, eliminating single use plastic etc.
- School Exhibition, and the development of Swachhata Action Plans.
- Swachhata Participation Day created a competitive fervor amongst children with competitions like painting, skit, slogan, letter/ essay writings etc.
- Community Outreach Day ensured participation of parents and facilitated reach of critical messages to community.
- Special meetings on cleanliness, CAB, and vaccination drives were held.
 - Around 108000 parents, SMC members participated in various events.

Some specific corresponding measures that contributed as enabling factors for effective observation of the Sanitation Pakhwada are highlighted below:

- To address CAB, the State Education Department issued government orders for the use of composite grant provisions for regular sanitization and effective operation and maintenance of school WASH facilities.
- With technical support of UNICEF, over 1.5 lakh participants were trained on CAB and IPC as an integral part of school reopening. These trained participants played a key role in Swachhata Pakhwada activities.
- 11,000 COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations were installed across the state. UNICEF extended support in technical design and supportive monitoring.
- Continued emphasis on O&M, handholding, monitoring support, and the dissemination of best practices helped in effective implementation, replication and scaling up.

The observance of Swachhata Pakhwada event proved as an ideal platform for school reopening, thereby contributing to making schools lively and abuzz with activities while actively involving children to make way for their own safe future. The fortnight marked sanitation as an entry point for safe school reopening for children and also for the community at large. Some of the key outputs are summarised below:

- Around 12 million children spanning across 99600 government schools participated in the fortnight campaign.



Figure 37: Drawing competition, engaging children in COVID-19 response during the Swachhata Pakhwada

- The cleanliness drive was led by children, facilitated by teachers and participated by parents, witnessed by community. The mass participation filled the vacuum with one loud and impactful cry of - 'Swachha Bharat, Sundar Bharat and Sakshar Bharat' (Clean India, Beautiful India and Literate India).
- The event filled each classroom with gaiety and an air of festivity. Beyond textbooks, schools made significant strides to develop students as healthier citizens of tomorrow.
- The colors of the imagination and expectations expressed by the children in their drawings during school activities and various competitions organised during the event showed the absorption of the messages around CAB.
- The practice of students donating soaps on their birthday to schools to support handwashing started a new trend in habit formation for safe hygiene, cleanliness, and duty towards the school.
- Children were inquisitive and thrilled to wash their hands with soap in an informed manner as an exercise. The exercise instilled a sense of creativity and prioritization towards hygiene and correct handwashing practices.
- Students took a pledge to observe handwashing practices daily at critical times with CAB, in addition to keeping their school premises clean and healthy.
- Continued focus on rigorous awareness campaigns, and quality of operations and maintenance, contributing to sustained use of basic hygiene and sanitation facilities, emerged as an important output from the campaign.

11 Good Practices from Maharashtra

The good practices in Maharashtra focussed on assessments for evidence based prioritised actions programming and planning; collaborative multi-stakeholder efforts convergence for disaster management, resource-pooling; training of relevant stakeholders at speed to meet the new demands and skills required during the pandemic; catalysing retrofitting of existing toilet infrastructure for safe sanitation in schools and anganwadi centers through interdepartmental linkage; celebration of special days like Global Handwashing Day and World Toilet day as a platform for mass stakeholder engagement for awareness generation on CAB, WASH and IPC and; need to design special contextualised programs for different categories of vulnerable communities which are often neglected or ignored during emergencies/pandemic.

11.1 WASH Factsheet for Schools and Anganwadis

Open Defecation Free (ODF) status assessment in GPs/ULBs invariably integrates schools, anganwadis and public toilets besides household level toilets. In view of COVID-19, in 2020, the Government of Maharashtra undertook a State-wide mobile app supported ODF status survey for verifying the survey done as a baseline in 2012. This phase two of the survey, included all key settings such as households, schools, anganwadi centres, public and community toilet. One of the key features of this survey was the development of State level and district-wise factsheets including an implication note which highlighted the lacunae's and guided probable areas of action.

Based on the survey, some key indicators and corresponding State-level findings from 10,100 schools are summarised below:

- Toilet coverage: 95.9% of schools have toilet facilities.
- CWSN toilet: 56.7% schools have separate toilets for visually impaired students or students with disabilities.
- Pit type (toilets): 37.2% schools have single pit type, 33.6% twin pit, 26.4% septic tank, 0.5% linked to bio-gas chamber, 2.3% with other technology.
- Septic tank connection to soak pit: 91.6% of school toilets are connected to soak pit.



Figure 38: State Fact Sheet (glimpse)

- Schools with toilet usability concern: 4.5% schools have usability concerns.
- Reasons for not using toilets:
 - Absence of maintenance (61.8%),
 - Lack of water (31.1%)
 - Attitudinal reasons (7.1%).
- Toilet cleaning (% of schools):
 - Very clean (89%)
 - Moderately clean (10%)
 - Very dirty (1%)
- Water source (% of schools):
 - Piped supply (60.9%)
 - Hand pumps (23.6%)
 - RO plant (1.8%), well (8.4%)
 - Other water source (5.3%)
- Handwashing with soap in practice: 90% schools practice handwashing with soap.



Figure 39: District Fact Sheet (glimpse)

These findings related to schools in Maharashtra indicated a better overall status of WASH in schools, with areas of improvement/ focus like - practice of handwashing with soap (for 10% of schools), toilet for CWSN (for 43% schools) along with the need to focus on toilet maintenance, cleanliness and access to piped water etc. District wise variations were to be addressed through local convergent opportunities. Corresponding findings were also made available for anganwadi centers (16,554) for analysis in the context of pandemic.

Key Highlights/ Features:
Fact sheets for State and districts was a ready reference for WASH in Schools, AWCs

Key Learnings

Such fact sheets (state & district level) supported through mobile App survey (during COVID time), with inter district variation of the status in different contexts, are useful as a ready reference (for both awareness & information), to decision-makers to identify key priority areas for improving WASH in schools, anganwadis and ensure CAB

11.2 School safety response during pandemic

Maharashtra has been a hotspot for COVID-19, with major cities like Mumbai, Thane, Pune among the worst affected regions in India. Migrant workers and marginalised communities were severely hit due to lack of livelihood sources and subsequent rushing back to their homes (miles away from them). Considering the urgency, UNICEF Maharashtra worked collaboratively at multiple levels through a State specific COVID-19 platform called - MAHA C19 PECONet with government departments, corporates, development partners, volunteers, civil society organizations. All interventions related to containment; management and response were taken up under the name “Jeevan Rath”. School readiness has been one of the key verticals, under Maharashtra's comprehensive response to the humanitarian crisis.



Figure 40: Online webinar on safe school priorities (WASH, IPC in schools), during pandemic, Maharashtra

Additional key areas observed/ initiated/ addressed under MAHA C19 PECONet included:

- Encouraging school’s role to provide safe space to vulnerable children (from poor, marginalized section)
- Leveraging local resources, to prioritize supplies such as soaps, cleaning material, sanitizers, functional WASH facilities, regular disinfection of common spaces etc
- Promoting the use of MGNREGS resources for special drives such as to paint school buildings, developing nutrition gardens in schools (including village women’s role in cleaning of community areas like schools etc.)
- SoPs and guidelines in local languages
- Role of trained stakeholders to conduct (promote) awareness sessions with students, community in their vicinity with key local IEC media
- Role of Department of Water Supply and Sanitation to also includes schools in their priority during the field level status assessment

Key Highlights/ Features:

- Capacity building at scale- WASH, IPC, CAB
- Special awareness sessions
- Leveraging resources for essential WASH supplies, COVID Sensitive adaptation and service improvement
- Community ownership

Overall key areas/ subjects in the interventions included WASH, IPC/CAB, risk communications and community engagement (RCCE), menstrual hygiene management (MHM) support and life skills, waste management.

Some of the notable measures taken up for school readiness are summarised below:

1. Rural: 31958 Zila Parishad teachers (34 rural districts) and 400 Village Social Transformation Foundation (VSTF) fellows were exclusively trained for safe school preparedness. Training also included key associated stakeholders such as Swachhagrahis, Jalsurakshaks, Kendra Pramukhs, FLWs, and volunteers.
2. Urban: 13,000 MCGM education officials were trained/sensitized on basic skills about school preparedness, with a specific focus on SOPs and guidelines on CAB.
3. 50 MCGM schools (converted into COVID Care Centres), covered under the “Flush the Virus (Chase the Virus)” campaign to engage with the local community for local level prioritization for infection prevention.
4. School toilets provided with over 300 elbow-operated hand taps

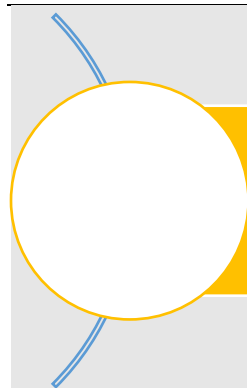


Figure 41: Online webinar on WASH in schools and safe learning, 2020

The training was well planned with special effort made to make it accessible and easily understandable. As this critical time demands, “the sessions on COVID-19 accompanied by possible adaptation methods and activities, those were reassuring and enlightening.

– Kiran D’Silva, Beat Officer, MCGM, Education Department

Key Learnings



Local level modest and relevant coordinated initiatives coupled with convergent measures by different partners enabled community mobilisation and increasing access to safe WASH and IPC facilities at school, home, and other settings.

11.3 Observation of World Toilet Day 2020

On World Toilet Day 2020 (WTD 2020), UNICEF Maharashtra facilitated a week-long awareness campaign from 17th to 23rd November 2020, with the support of government departments, development partners, and support organizations. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 in the State, WTD-2020 emerged as an opportunity to reach a large number of key stakeholders’ including students, teachers, young people, communities, sanitation workers, women, and service providers around the sanitation value chain.



Figure 42: Drawing competition, in a school during WTD 2020, Maharashtra

Key activities undertaken for “WASH in School” included cleaning of school and anganwadi toilets, retrofitting of defunct toilet blocks, awareness session (on toilet use, hand hygiene, F diagram etc), social media linked activities, competitions (with awards to good key performers) etc. Large number of students also participated in promoting key messages (around the theme WTD theme - sustainable sanitation and climate change) through platforms like social media such as WhatsApp school groups, Facebook, Twitter etc.

One of the remarkable activities taken up by the Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Government of Maharashtra during the WTD was the retrofitting and cleaning of toilets in schools and AWC across the State. The reach of the activity is enumerated below :

- School toilet blocks cleaned – 36431
- Cleaning of anganwadi toilets – 45659
- Retrofitting of defunct toilet blocks in schools – 2928

This activity reinforced the O&M priorities for WASH.

Some specific associated activities through partner organizations also included the following:

Ecosan Services Foundation

- Virtual session on awareness on use of toilets, f-diagram, and hand hygiene
- Quiz competition for school students, to create awareness on water and sanitation, reaching out to 10,000 people (Area: Pune, Mumbai schools)

Symbiosis Community Outreach Program and Extension (SCOPE), Pune:

- Drawing competition awareness regarding sanitation and clean toilets for students from 5th to 7th standards (Area: Mulshi Villages, Pune- Sus, Nande, Mulkhed and Lavale, with reach to 500 persons)

Citizens Association for Child Rights (CACR), Triratna Prerana Mandal (TPM)

- Local awareness about cleanliness and importance of toilets
- Drawing competition in Municipal Schools (Area: Mumbai E and W Ward, With 1,620)

Key Highlights/ Features:

- School, AWC toilets cleaning at scale
- Retrofitting of defunct toilet blocks schools, AWCs at scale



Figure 43: Awareness session with children, during WTD 2020, Maharashtra

11.4 Observation of Global Handwashing Day

Global Handwashing Day 2020 with the theme of “Hand hygiene for all” leveraged the importance of handwashing with soap as one of the key protective measures against COVID-19. UNICEF Maharashtra, State Government and partner organizations utilized this opportunity to reach out to a wide section of the society with social behaviour change messaging in line with CAB. Some of the key activities taken up with the school communities in the State included the following:

- Education department with technical support from UNICEF Maharashtra organized a State-wide online seminar with teachers and key officials. Key areas covered included – importance of GHD and the 2020 theme, handwashing station technology, sharing of relevant IEC’s such as videos, teasers etc as SBCC resources. Trained teachers took these messages forward to the students and parents effectively with various engaging activities such as handwashing steps demonstration, tippy taps, drawing, poster making, social media engagements around handwashing among local groups etc.
- UNICEF and its partners facilitated GHD in their capacity/jurisdiction areas with a wide range of activities including - awareness sessions (virtual/ physical with CAB adherence), demonstration, essay, drawing, poster making competition, consultation/ sessions, hygiene material distribution, IEC/ BCC, video development, speeches, prize/award, certificate distributions, installing tippy tap model, inaugural of handwashing stations etc.



Figure 44: Drawing by children on hand hygiene during GHD 2020

The weeklong GHD celebration was supported by many partners like

- Anjuman-I- Islam"s Dr MIJ HS and Jr college
- Bharat Scout Guide
- Chatrabhu Narsee School
- Citizens Association for Child Rights (CACR),
- CYDA,
- Ecosan Services Foundation
- Idobro Impact Solutions
- Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM)
- Podar International School SSC and HSC
- RISE Infinity Foundation.
- Roshni Foundation and Charitable Trust
- Sakhya women guidance cell
- Society for Action in Creative Education and Development (SACRED)
- SVPV Vidyalaya
- Vivek Vidyalaya



Figure 45: Tippy Tap at home by a girl child, inspired her friends and visitors to understand the importance of non-touch hands washing during COVID-19, Maharashtra

Tippy Tap at Home

Motivated by watching teasers, videos from UNICEF, a schoolgirl (11 years old) named Sufi Shringare, from the aspirational Washim district, made a 'Tippy Tap' at her home in the front yard. Her father supported in developing tippy tap, using recycled materials like can, rope, and a wooden frame. Besides motivating family members, visitors, other colleagues in her vicinity, she motivated many others as a change agent to develop low-cost safe tippy tap handwash installed at home (through the viral photos in social media).



Fish swimming in the water

Figure 46: Hand Washing step demo, to advocate the importance of handwashing during COVID-19 (GHD, 2020)

Student's efforts for GHD awareness

Ms. Simran Sudhir Tendolkar, 7th class students of zilla parishad upper primary central school, Banda, Sindhudurg district, inspired her family to take part (along with herself) in handwashing challenge at hashtags, 'MyFamilyMyResponsibility'. She developed 7 videos on topics such as - handwash importance, making tippy tap using available material at home, our safety is in our hands, when to wash hands, how to wash hands, save water while washing hands and posted, it on social media for GHD messaging, for spreading the theme of the day across.

Despite several lockdown restrictions including schools and anganwadi closure, a weeklong GHD celebration was able to reach a large section of society – 80,000 students, teacher, children 7 AWC staff and 120,000 college youth.

11.5 Study on ODF/ WASH sustainability in schools and AWCs

During COVID-19, UNICEF's partner organisation - SIGMA facilitated an occasional paper on the status of ODF sustainability in Maharashtra. The study covered villages of 6 districts namely - Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Jalna, Nandurbar, Osmanabad, Pune, Raigad, and Washim, from December 2019 to March 2020. Primary data collection covered different settings such as- GPs (14), households (215 from 22 villages), schools (15), anganwadis (17) and health care facilities (11). Though the sample size was small, but the study focussed on collecting data on related qualitative aspects of WASH to facilitate a broad holistic understanding of the existing context at the field level. Key findings from the selected sample schools (15) highlighted the following:

Toilet/sanitation

- 66.7% schools with separate toilets for girls and boys.
- 6 schools (40%), with either separate toilet for divyang students/ toilets with arrangements as handrail/ramp
- Girls' user per toilet 43.5 (range 13-175)
- Boys' user per toilet 55.5 (range 18-175)
- 31.3% of the girls' toilets and 23.1% of the boys' toilets were found defunct
- 33.3% toilets with single pits, 40% twin pits, 26.7% septic tanks based.

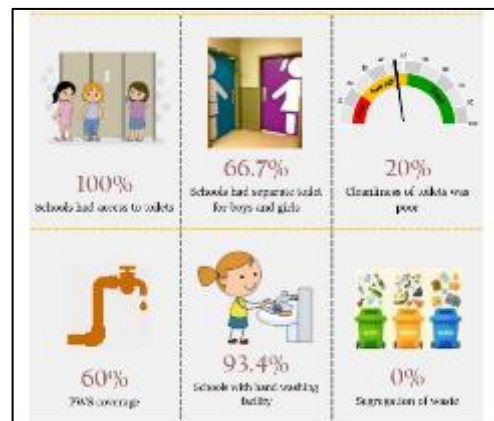


Figure 47: Context on key WASH indicators in schools (assessment findings)

- 33.3% of schools with piped water supply inside the toilet, 40% with water manually stored inside toilets
- In 40% schools' soap available in the toilet for handwashing
- Toilet cleanliness: Good in 40% of schools, 33.3% average, 26.7% poor
- 40% of school toilets found to have proper ventilation
- In 53.3% schools, there were some systems of cleaning toilets
- Only in 25% schools, toilets were cleaned daily
- All upper primary schools lacked facilities for safe MHM in girls' toilets (no covered bins and/or water and soap)

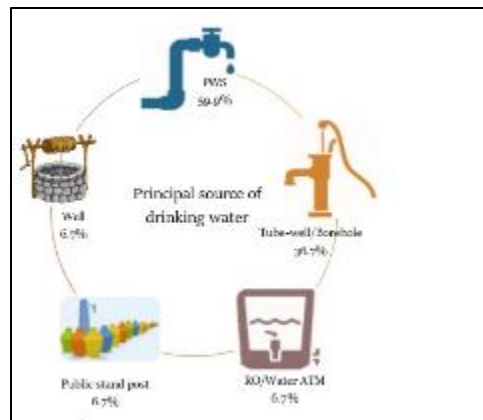


Figure 48: Main source of drinking water in schools

Water

- 60% with piped water supply (53.2% of schools, with piped water piped within premises and stored in a reservoir)
- 77.8% of schools used RO filters while in 11.1% of schools, water was strained through a cloth

Handwashing with Soap

- In 6.7% of schools, there was no fixed hand washing station
- In 53.3% of schools, students wash hands with soap at all critical times.

O&M

- Waste segregation is not practiced in any of the schools. 86.6% without any specific measure to dispose of the solid wastes.
- In 26.7% of schools, greywater is used for watering plants in the garden, 20% schools yet to have a functional drainage

Behaviour Change and Capacity Development

- 33.3% schools had at least 2 trained teachers
- In 42.9% MHM is discussed once in three months, while in 50% of schools it is not discussed with girl students
- 53.3% schools had lady teachers trained on MHM
- 46.7% of schools had an active child cabinet (Bal Sansad) members taking active role in promoting sanitation and hygiene practices
- In 60% of schools, IEC material on WASH is available within premises



Figure 49: Hand hygiene practice by children

These findings indicated critical improvement areas for key WinS indicators in schools. This quick status review facilitated by this short assessment was helpful to inform and develop a safe school action plan with stakeholders at different levels.

Key Learnings

A well-designed system of local third-party assessment on WASH in schools can provide critical realistic inputs for decision-makers for improved WinS program outcomes and COVID response and preparedness.

11.6 Checklist for reopening of schools

The Government of Maharashtra issued detailed guidelines on school opening in June 2020. Based on these guidelines, MSCERT, UNICEF, field practitioners (education department officials and teachers) and partner organizations facilitated the development of a checklist¹⁰ for school reopening. This was used as a tool for school reopening decisions.

These checklists were developed in consideration of local State context and related safe school reopening priorities. Checklists helped the school headmaster, teachers, and school management committee (SMC) members in their assessment and action plans for school reopening readiness and necessary preparation for smooth functioning of schools.

These clear, comprehensive checklists are divided into separate sections as presented below:

1. Prerequisites that need to be considered for opening of the school (with 5 checklists with “Yes/ No” decision column): points relate to containment zone, essential supplies as soap, water, school sanitization, teachers’ availability and contact with the nearest facility.
2. Preparation required before opening the school with 6 subparts (with action and deadline points to be filled by school). This has checklist points under the following subheads– a) the premises, b) masks and thermometers c) timetable, d) teachers’ (and non-teaching staffs’) preparedness, e) involvement of the community, f) identifying new and previously out-of-school children. These actionable points relate to ensuring safe WASH, infection prevention measures, CAB (including supplies, risk assessment, orientation, stakeholders’ engagement)

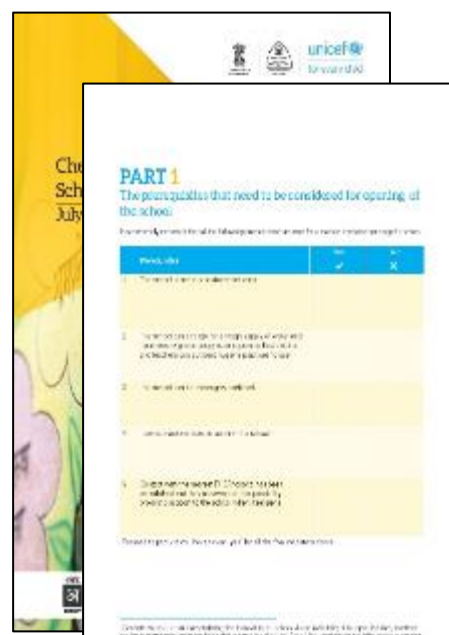


Figure 50: Checklist for safe school reopening, Maharashtra

Key Highlights/ Features:

- A clear framework for school with – prerequisite essentials, preparation before opening school, and actions after school reopens

¹⁰ Link to the checklist –

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YrytwV6EABga5mAKdbwr_JJeJ_MnnNO/view?usp=sharing

3. Things to do after opening the school (with action and deadline points to be filled by school). This section has a set of checklists for the following key areas: a) entry and exit, b) following routine while maintaining physical distancing, c) IEC material, d) COVID-19. These relate to corresponding IPC practices during school processes, at various critical sites of concern.

The comprehensive checklist duly endorsed by the Government of Maharashtra provided a clear framework for the school to assess readiness, planning, and post-school reopening operations (in COVID time). The document has high relevance for Maharashtra’s school reopening strategy as schools were ensuring the protocols accordingly, to ensure safe and infection free learning environment.

11.7 WASH and protection centered approach for COVID-19 with focus on children and women-in-institutions and vulnerable communities

As a response to the COVID-19 crisis, this project was a joint initiative of Child Protection and WASH section of UNICEF, in Child Care Institutions (CCIs), protection/shelter homes and red-light areas. The Project was conceptualised by UNICEF Maharashtra and Kshamata (NGO) aimed to reach out to children and women in institutions and vulnerable communities through WASH supplies and psycho-social intervention, through a quick assessment in view of COVID-19 difficulties faced by this vulnerable group.

Project Objectives

- Ensure IPC measures related to COVID-19 through improved access to hygiene material, relevant facilities etc., within government CCIs and women shelter homes
- To ensure that children and women in institutions have access to recreational and psychological toolkits and other means to enable them to cope with emotional distress arising in pandemic.
- To build the capacity of the staff, caretaker in institutions for CAB and equip them to provide necessary information, to support women and children to cope mentally and stay safe.

Key Project Activities

WASH supplies, CAB sessions, recreational and psychosocial interventions, capacity building

Project coverage

Five districts of Maharashtra were included covering 45 CCIs and shelter homes and 10 red-light areas. City-wise concerned partner organizations are listed below:

Mumbai:	Apne Aap Women’s Collective and Citizens Association for Child Rights
Thane:	Purnata, Alert India, Family Planning Asso. of India, Lok Parishad, Citizens Asso. for Child Rights
Pune:	Center for Youth Development and Activities and Citizens Association for Child Rights
Kolhapur:	Lulla Foundation and Citizens Association for Child Rights
Satara:	Center For Youth Development and Activities and Citizens Association for Child Rights

Some of the key gaps identified/ observed

- Lack of basic hygiene services and supplies for women and children in CCI and shelter homes
- Limited adherence to CAB
- Lack of proper information among women from vulnerable background (as in brothel communities) especially on covid-vaccination and related CAB etc.



Figure 51: Children with hygiene kit in their hands

Key project support in respective institutions/ community

Activity	CCI	Shelter homes	Brothel
1. Hygiene Kit support (had sanitizer, hair oil, nail cutter, talcum powder, hair comb, hair shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrush)	✓	✓	✓
2. Soap and Mask support	✓	✓	
3. Handwashing Station installation (need based)	✓	✓	
4. Elbow Operated Taps installation (need based)	✓	✓	
5. Sanitization and Cleaning Material for institutions (need based)	✓	✓	
6. PPE Gear Distribution	✓	✓	
7. Recreational Tool Kit, for children	✓		
8. Psycho-social toolkits for women in the select institutions		✓	
9. Art Based Therapy (ABT) sessions for all the children using storytelling, mandela art, drawing (in the select institutions)	✓	✓	
10. Caretakers, housekeeping staff orientation on COVID-19 measures		✓	
11. CAB awareness sessions- Children/ Women	✓	✓	✓
12. Awareness campaigns to influence for vaccination			✓

Activity	CCI	Shelter homes	Brothel
13. Equipping -women with information on mental health and self-care			✓

Special features/ support

The project aimed to address the need of a vulnerable diverse group, cutting across age, gender, background, location, language during COVID-19 time. Key features on the project support areas include:

- Repeated visits through local CSOs/ partners in CCIs, women shelter homes, identified brothel communities to ensure active participation, need assessment and execution of project activities
- Timely provision of essential WASH supplies such as:
 - Soap and mask distribution - 19009 beneficiaries
 - Hygiene kit - 3461 units
 - Handwashing station installed– 68
 - Elbow operated taps facilitation - 152
 - Sanitation kit - 34
 - PPE gear distribution – 456 units
- Therapeutic tools designed for recreational and psychological care session with support of ABT practitioners along with expert support for sessions
- IEC material on CAB and vaccination with customization to the user context (language, picture, gender, protocols etc) provided to reinforce IPC and CAB
- Use of various props like balloons, ribbons, soft etc. to facilitate increased body awareness, co-ordination and for creating a sense of play etc.
- Individual and group drawing activities conducted to facilitate group co-ordination, communication without words, mutual understanding and reducing conflict etc
- Dissemination of project activities through social media handle like twitter, quarterly newsletter, meetings with government and non-governments organizations.

Project effectively served the following outputs:

- Ensured WASH supplies (support material, facilities) to facilitate timely IPC and safety
- Children and women in institutions facilitated to cope with emotional distress and supported healing through specialized sessions, recreational activities, psychological care toolkit (70 percent of participants could connect after additional inputs)
- Timely capacity building/awareness of key stakeholders on IPC and CAB (In charge, caretakers/staff and women and children etc.)
- Active engagement with mentally challenged group through props like balloons, soft balls and ribbons to facilitated immense joy, relief, happiness, smile and laughter on their faces



Figure 52: Children enjoying Art Based Therapy (ABT) sessions (through expert support)

- Much needed vaccination awareness drives conducted in red light areas of Mumbai Metropolitan Region and Pune Metropolitan Region, with follow up to ensure the second shot of vaccine.

Emergent recommendations

- Need for continuous follow up for WASH supplies and O&M of WASH facilities and services
- CCIs in Satara, Kolhapur and Pune need to emphasise, intense interventions to reintegrate children in society.
- Further engagement, support for expressive art-based sessions to de-stress, allow free expression, explore creativity etc.
- Periodic use of toolkits provided by the various institutions
- Need to explore scope to have academic learning program, hands on activities (especially for women above 18) through digital platforms/ other local mechanism
- Need of planned interventions in consultation with the home in-charge in some places where children/adults have psychological disorders
- Need based designed long-term interventions using expressive therapies to help bring resolution of various intra-individual and intra-group challenges.
- Ensuring enabling environment, working conditions and support to caretakers (including breaks etc as they work extremely stress full conditions)
- Engagement with caretakers for creating an inbuilt mechanism of self-care, developing emotional intelligence, and emotional first aid be undertaken. (Through external trainers/ any platform)

12 Good Practices from Odisha

The good practices from Odisha focussed on preparation of manual for technical designs on covid-responsive minimal touch handwashing stations and its dissemination through film for adoption by large number of schools. The State also showcased good practices in mobilisation of funds through District Mineral Foundation for facilitating WASH infrastructure in schools.

12.1 Minimal hand-touch handwashing stations (MHTHWS) for schools and hostels

In the wake of COVID-19, access to safe handwashing stations is an essential prevention measure in schools and a critical part of the safe school reopening agenda for the State. The SC/ST Department, Government of Odisha with technical support from UNICEF prepared an SOP on minimal hand touch handwashing stations (MHTHWS). This SOP acted as a guide to departmental schools and hostels for installation and operationalizing of COVID-19 sensitive minimal handwashing stations.

The SOP covered COVID-19 sensitive adaptations to technical design of handwashing stations with specific briefs on the following key subheads:

- Scope and sustainability
- Design principle for handwashing facilities
- Pre-design questions
- Guiding factors for the design of handwashing station - attractive, convenient and easy to use, effective hand hygiene, sustainability etc.
- Necessary components other than the station
- Operation and maintenance
- Estimates for minimal hand touch handwashing station with 500 liter of water with twin sink



Figure 53: Girls practicing safe hand hygiene through use of newly installed MHTHWS

The SOP provided appropriate information on significance of hand hygiene, technical designs and layouts, cost estimates, user-friendly considerations, COVID-19 related adaptations, O&M, sustainability concerns with the need for nudges/ visual cues to instil and reinforce behaviour among the students.

With specific orientation by SC/ST department and UNICEF, a total of 750 such handwashing units were installed and are being utilized effectively at schools/ hostels. The resources were leveraged through the district level welfare offices, PA, ITDA offices and so on. The SC/ST Department also ensured O&M and upkeep of handwashing facilities through funds provided under Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA)/ Tribal Development Fund available to the concerned schools.

This initiative was documented through a short film¹¹ by SC/ST department for further public advocacy and is telecasted through local TV channel. The responses from the schools, hostels and ITDA offices has been documented to share the learnings from this intervention for replication and scaling up.

12.2 Promoting hand hygiene in a school, Jajpur district

Jajpur district in Odisha was a severely impacted COVID-19 district. Barahambada High School, in Jajpur district, Odisha, serves more than 500 girls from primary and secondary levels. The school streamlined its WASH facilities, including access to piped water supply and seven new toilet facilities with child-friendly provisions. Over the years, with good WASH infrastructure, the school has effectively inspired parents to send their girls to school. Saniya, a student, shares that “I wish our neighbourhood could get piped drinking water, just like we get at school.”

In view of the COVID-19 challenge, the school has recently installed a no-touch pedal group hand wash station and soap dispenser (supported by ORBIA-UNICEF), with its’ overhead tank connected to piped water. The Principal shares that hand washing was never a regular practice or a habit as it was inconvenient; but the current pandemic has made people more cautious. Easy accessibility to running water through piped supply and availability of soap in school has proven to be a very impactful and desirable in adoption of covid-responsive behaviours.

The “No touch Pedal Hand-wash station” is essential and safe to use as compared to the bucket and soap which were provided/ used earlier.

Sania, student

I can use it without the help of anyone. Earlier I used to ask another classmate to use a mug to pour me water from the bucket and the same soap would be used by everyone.”

Barsha, school student

I have been teaching siblings about various stages of proper handwashing at home. I use to make it a fun task for everyone.

Sophia Perveen, student

¹¹ Link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OtomIVm1olk>

In addition, UNICEF and AIIMS Bhubaneswar have partnered for WASH in School, AWC, and Solid Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) Project. In this partnership, schools are developing a detailed improvement plan. District Mineral Foundation funds are planned to be leveraged to ensure WASH infrastructure, O&M and behaviour change interventions to support safe school/ AWC environment.



Figure 54: 14 years old Sofia Parveen and Bushra Alam of class 9 perform the various stages of handwashing at the contact free handwashing unit

13 Good Practices in Rajasthan

The good practices in Rajasthan focussed on preparation of a safe school reopening compendium as a guided and illustrative tool-book for assessing school-readiness and preparing for safe school reopening and use of rapid assessment and process documentation for WASH in schools and anganwadi in urban slums for guiding prioritized actions in response to COVID-19.

13.1 Safe school reopening compendium (सतरंगों – धनक)

Repeated resurgences of COVID-19, lack of vaccination for children and limited reach of virtual learning mode were continually challenging the State government of Rajasthan to reopen schools and fulfil its mandate for providing education in safe environs. In this background UNICEF with its partner organization VINYAS extended technical support to Government of Rajasthan through the preparation of school reopening compendium¹² (सतरंगों – धनक) to curb COVID-19 infection while contributing to safe school and co-located anganwadis.

In addition to the booklet, a specific quick assessment was also conducted by the State government across 77 different category schools of four districts namely - Barmer, Jaisalmer, Sirohi and Dungarpur. This assessment provided key recommendations/ inputs for safe school reopening in the state.

The guidance booklet is a tool book for teachers, students, SMCs, anganwadi workers (AWW) and anganwadi helpers; and help them take necessary preparedness measures in developing the school (with co-located AWCs) as a safe, clean, and infection-free space. The booklet content values and acknowledges the inter-linkages of home, community, and institutions (schools, anganwadi) and encourages shared responsibility for efforts to create safe schools.

The booklet provides a checklist in Part-I. The title of the guidance documents “सतरंगों – धनक” relates to “7 rainbow colors” suggesting a relation to 7 key points to be considered under safe schools:

- Safe sanitation/ toilet
- Handwashing
- Safe water
- Food safety and hygiene
- Safe space for reading, playing, etc
- Respiratory hygiene
- COVID-19 safe campus (community ownership).



Figure 55: Comprehensive guidance on ensuring safe and infection free schools and co located AWCs, with appropriate COVID sensitive IEC, Rajasthan

Part-II of the document briefs about these indicators in detail. This section also provides illustrations of various models/ options for safe distancing within school spaces.

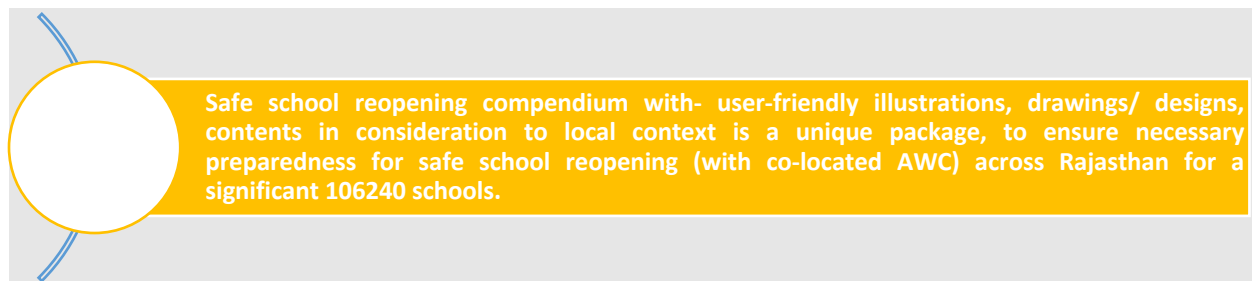
Part III of the document explains key measures to be followed during COVID-19, with appropriate visuals, illustrations, and actionable points. Considering the different resource settings and geo-

¹² Compendium link- https://drive.google.com/file/d/10g_Q0FXHI3sou9Z4ni4WdrP2jGkkcO58/view?usp=sharing

climatic conditions, the guideline provides a clear understanding (with examples) of the resources under different concerned schemes, departments etc. Key contextualized local IEC material, towards the end further aids to the applicability of the booklet in local school settings. Guidelines ensure that all the options are locally available to make the school and AWC safe, clean and infection-free.

This unique document regarding safe school and AWC is an outcome of a long-drawn process over a few months in 2020, including rounds of consultations and contribution of various experts, government, practitioners, and field observations from the selected districts of Rajasthan (with inputs from teachers, AWW, AWH, engineers). State government has been issuing various orders from time to time to ensure adherence to SOP after school reopening, along with monitoring mechanisms at different levels.

Key Learnings



13.2 Process documentation and assessment for WASH intervention in schools in slums of Jaipur

Systematic process documentation of WASH intervention in urban slums during COVID-19 was conducted under a partnership between UNICEF and the Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR). This specific process document in the urban context provided insights into WASH in ten surveyed schools and ten anganwadis. Although the sample size is limited, findings from this sample during the pandemic has been of relevance for decision-makers to facilitate safe school reopening. Some key findings related to schools (considering SVP criteria) are as follows:

- Water: Water facility available in 90% schools, water testing was not done, nine schools don't have water connection in the kitchen (MDM), schools are mostly without rainwater harvesting facility
- Toilet: 80% of toilets lacks gender-sensitive provisions, two schools did not have gender segregated toilets, most of the schools had filthy conditions around the toilets, two toilets were without water for handwashing, disposal of menstrual waste emerged as a key concern, incinerators were available in 7 schools, however most of them were either not functional or the staff/ students did not know how to use them (staff lacks demonstration, orientation, sensitization)



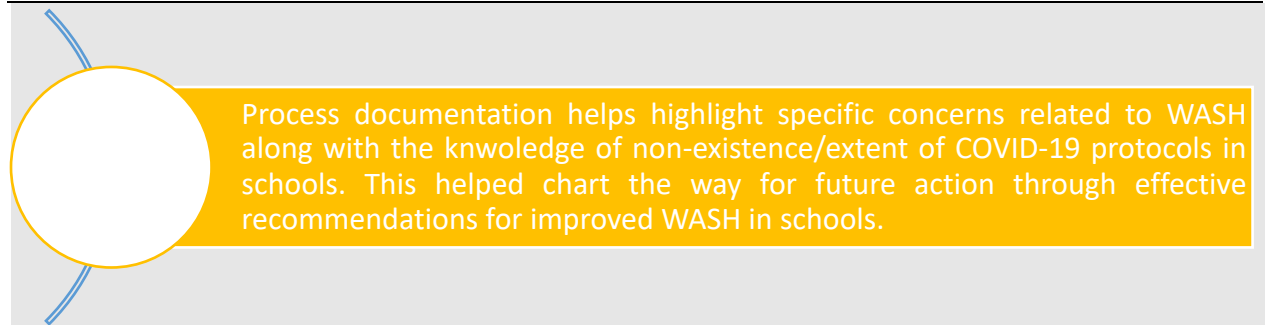
Figure 56: Children using COVID sensitive group handwashing facility installed in a school

- Handwashing Facilities: Schools lacked separate handwashing facilities; 30% schools do not have any washing facility in kitchen
- Operation and Maintenance: 60% of kitchens lacked dishwashing soap/ powder to wash utensils, 60% of schools with solid waste management system were linked to the municipality, four schools did not receive any government fund for O&M, 10% schools had sewerage systems (greywater management.)
- Behaviour Change and Capacity Building: Six schools had assigned teaches for hygiene education and students council for their key role (seven schools were without any program on these themes)
- SOPs for school reopening: None of the schools had safe school reopening protocols; some mothers had apprehension about status of WASH facilities in the school (for safe returning to schools in view of COVID-19)

Apart from above context of WASH in schools (slums), this partnership also facilitated following:

- Nine schools were provided with age-appropriate, foot-operated handwashing stations
- Four schools were supported for the installation of incinerators (installation includes, one year replacement warranty and additional one year free service for repair and maintenance (ISO and Pollution Control Board certified); IEC support (Do's, don't', short video etc)
- Some activities conducted within the community include - poster making for imagining green settlement with children and glitter activity for handwashing.

Key Learnings



Process documentation helps highlight specific concerns related to WASH along with the knowledge of non-existence/extent of COVID-19 protocols in schools. This helped chart the way for future action through effective recommendations for improved WASH in schools.

14 Good Practices in Uttar Pradesh

The good practices in Uttar Pradesh focussed on how top-driven State-level programmes can bring about rapid changes in emergency situations even at a scale as wide as that of Uttar Pradesh which spreads over 75 districts. Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp also lends learning experiences in departmental convergence, resource pooling, training and monitoring mechanisms. The case of Uttar Pradesh also showcases how human resources can be mobilised and trained for information dissemination and disaster management through its example of NSS cadet training.

14.1 Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp (OVK): Schools transformation through WASH in pandemic

Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp (school transformation), a pilot innovative approach to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) programming in schools was being implemented in two districts of Uttar Pradesh since 2014. The pilot was scaled up to the entire state of Uttar Pradesh with strengthened processes in COVID-19. Conventionally, given the huge scale of schools across 75 districts in the large state of Uttar Pradesh, provision of adequate and functional child-friendly WASH facilities, timely repair/retrofitting, operation and maintenance have been critical challenges in schools. But with the help of Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp Mission, the flagship program provided desired scope for identifying and addressing critical child-friendly WASH associated infrastructure and gaps in schools.

Under the program 14 core and four additional identified infrastructure works/investment areas area already particularly associated to WASH priorities in schools. But the pandemic offered a window to further strengthen Operation Kayakalp and its implementation, especially with regards to WASH facilities, keeping COVID-19 responsive infrastructure and behaviours in focus. UNICEF provided technical support in training/ capacity building of key stakeholders of school and GP, development of online interactive dashboard, handholding in field/ processes and promoting WASH compliant 5 STAR schools to excel further and lead the way as islands of excellence for other schools to emulate.



Figure 57: Guidelines for the child friendly School Kayakalp (Technical design manual for the teachers and Gram Panchayats)

Through local convergence among existing schemes, departments and local resources, key WASH associated activities/works were taken up. These activities included:

- Hand washing unit installation at entrance of the schools
- Wash basin in MDM kitchen for hand and food hygiene
- Disinfection of classrooms, WASH facilities and school premises before reopening
- Thermal scanning of children while entering schools
- Alternate taps use for handwashing with soap at group handwashing units
- Teachers' role in supervising handwashing with soap following one meter physical distance and six steps of handwashing
- IPC and school reopening videos were screened in classrooms and shared with parents.
- Adhering to physical distancing in the classrooms
- Success or champion stories of school safety/reopening were shared through social media and program reviews.



Figure 58: Students using group handwashing facility in a primary school, Deoria district, Uttar Pradesh

Scheme convergence: Some key schemes and resources included Fifteen Finance Commission, State Finance Commission, SBM (Gramin) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), composite grants of Samagra Shikha, CSR fund, District Mining Foundation (DMF) were utilised to fund the initiatives in schools.

This campaign also aligned to the desired outcome indicators of WASH in schools under Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya guideline 2014 and Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar priorities of Ministry of Education, Government of India.

Departmental convergence: Since it is a State government initiative, Operation Kayakalp, (with UNICEF's technical support), ensured specific orders and guidance from the top level bureaucracy including the Chief Secretary and other concerned department/ mission leaderships from Panchayati Raj Department, Education Department, Jal Jeevan Mission, Women and Child Development Department etc to flow till the bottom wrung of administration. This top heavy motivation for the program to succeed ensured high priority and attention at all levels of governance.

Training: Exclusive training on child-friendly WASH and COVID-19 sensitive adaptation (under Kayakalp) during May – July 2020, reached more than one lakh key stakeholders, across the State.

Monitoring mechanisms: A dynamic dashboard under the Prerna Portal of Department of Education, Government of Uttar Pradesh proved to be instrumental for prioritizing appropriate measures at different levels for Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp assessments and plans. Interactive voice response (IVR) system allowed automated calls to follow up progress received an

encouraging response. 5 STAR WASH compliant schools acted as learning labs and models of excellence for other schools to replicate and emulate.

Results and impact: Operation Vidyalaya Kayakalp proved effective for ensuring improved child friendly WASH provisions and services in schools in Uttar Pradesh. Some key results may be viewed as following:

- Exclusive WASH– IPC skills virtual training (with focus on child-friendly WASH, COVID-19 sensitive retrofitting, adaptation) reached 106,187 stakeholders (from schools, GP) out of which 67408 people (64%) were directly sensitized through UNICEF’s technical support.
- Assessment of > 1.5 lakh schools on 28 indicators was completed by September 2020
- 159,286 Schools (836 blocks) with Kayakalp implementation plan addressing key WASH priorities (with 96% of block and 93% of schools’ plans) were uploaded in Government’s online Prerna portal dashboard
- Improved compliance was observed on 14 identified core parameters - 43% in February 2020 to 62% coverage in July 2020.
- 26.59% growth (58.35% to 84.94%) in installation of multiple hand washing units covering 35,405 schools was observed.
- 35,652 schools were covered with piped water supply system under OVK and JJM (100 days campaign)
- Resource mobilization through convergence among departmental schemes at the local village/ GP level (INR 2100 crore (USD 28.4 million) leveraged from composite school grants, FFC grants of GPs and JJM (PWSS in institutions) leveraged for HW stations and PWSS in more than thirty-five thousand schools.
- SBCC package which included posters, job aids and animation videos on COVID-19 IPC on WASH and school reopening were developed and circulated to all 133,552 elementary schools for wider use.
- WASH compliant 5 STAR school approach (learning labs), worked as an inspirational model for other local schools.
- Institutional mechanism supported sustainable focus on ensuring functional child-friendly WASH services (with COVID-19 adaptation)



Figure 59: SBCC IPC pack in a Primary School/ Mohanlalganj, Lucknow

14.2 Trained NSS cadets facilitate awareness and mask making/distribution

In the wake of COVID-19, in 2020 UNICEF supported training of 26,926 National Service Scheme (NSS) cadets on key COVID-19 response priorities including - IPC, risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) strategies, reusable mask production, CAB etc. Participants of

these training included - NSS volunteers, coordinators and nodal officers of various universities of Uttar Pradesh.

Sensitized/ trained NSS cadets took up several initiatives in some districts to support COVID-19 response measures. NSS volunteers adopted 100 villages of 16 districts of Uttar Pradesh. Some of their key initiatives include:

- Sensitization on key COVID-19 appropriate behaviours (CAB)
- Production and distribution of masks, other hygiene/safety materials such as face shields etc., in respective districts - 587120 masks produced in May- June 2020 and distributed to beneficiaries by NSS (in 26 districts)
- Mask bank development in Gonda, Jhansi, Bijnor district with community and district administration support
- Bijnor district mask bank supported by Rohilkhand University volunteers was inaugurated by Panchayati Raj Minister, Uttar Pradesh, along with the presence of 4 MLAs from Bijnor and Moradabad districts



Figure 60: Masks production by NSS, Ballia, Uttar Pradesh

Key Learnings

Sensitized NSS volunteers, can supplement workforce for emergency relief work, timely resource mobilization, and community reach. The trained manpower is a future asset for several other developmental programming as they have the skill and connect with the community.

15 Good Practices from West Bengal

The good practices in West Bengal focussed on the importance of data collection with regards to WASH services and the use of analysed data in informing planned actions. The case of Malda's water quality management initiative also highlights the key role of local administration and stakeholders in programmatic planning, implementation, monitoring and sustainability.

15.1 Water Quality assessment drive in schools and anganwadis of Malda district

COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 caused disruptions in ensuring smooth water services in different settings along with challenges of water quality sample collection processes. Since potable drinking water is a basic necessity and right, the identification of the affected regions and ensuring quality water in all settings emerged as a priority area.

In this context, Malda district facilitated a convergence meeting at the district level, to support post-pandemic safe drinking water in schools and anganwadis. A special drive for water sample collection in 146 gram panchayats was conducted between October – November 2020. 1177 samples were collected from 1166 schools and 901 samples were collected from 832 anganwadis. The drive was organized through trained local GP level 'Jal Banhus'. The entire exercise was informative for the district to identify high, medium, or low risks schools and anganwadis. It helped identify major water-quality affected vulnerable schools, anganwadis, and habitations. Contaminated water sources were then linked and integrated with the annual gram panchayat planning process to address the issue.

Further, data analysis of water quality test drives facilitated the Malda district in block level assessment in identifying the blocks affected with arsenic, coliforms, E Coli, etc. The results were then shared with the district administration along with consultations for mitigation of arsenic and fluoride contamination. The strategy also stressed to cover the schools with piped water supply wherever communities were already covered with piped water supply.



Figure 61: De-fluoridation plant in a school

Thus, a set of appropriate recommendations were made to the district for improved planning of water quality monitoring sample collection, IEC/BCC, and appropriate actions in different poor-quality affected schools, anganwadis. Role of PRIs in monitoring and planning was also duly noted and they were actively engaged in the overall plan. These proposed measures also listed school's

role in the surveillance and local testing of samples. As part of this endeavour, long-term solutions were listed like:

- Prioritizing an extension of the existing piped water connection to schools, AWCs
- Resource convergence for piped water with proper O&M

The effort in Malda district helped in developing an evidence-based plan with strategies to ensure sustained water services for schools.

16 Way Forward

Schools in the Indian context offer a range of services for children in terms of health, nutrition (as mid-day meal), psychological and mental wellbeing, development of life skills, etc., in addition to education. Thus, school closures induced by the pandemic had unprecedented long-term consequences on children's education and learning, protection, health, and wellbeing.

In view of COVID-19, there have been remarkable efforts across the country to ensure continued learning through the digital and hybrid modes. In the Indian context, online/ digital learning had unique challenges of reach to the larger community, particularly to the children from vulnerable section/ and hard to reach areas. As school-based classroom learning has been recognized as an important mode for delivering quality education, preparedness of the school systems in terms of capacities of teachers, staff, parents etc., adequate support infrastructure for COVID-19 sensitive preparedness and response were among the key thrust areas before school reopening. More specifically for safety and security of students within the closed spaces of school, water, sanitation and hygiene, infection control measures in the schools (particularly associated O&M aspects) are amongst top essential pre-conditions.

During this challenging period of uncertainty, government, CSOs, UNICEF, support partner organisations, and the school community worked jointly to address the need of safe school reopening, preparedness, and emergency response measures. In this backdrop, the present compendium provides insight of good practices and evidence-based learning from field experiences across several states with UNICEF's field presence. The compendium includes selective cases/ practices related to following emergency response interventions areas:

- SOPs and protocols for schools reopening
- Capacity building of key stakeholders
- Awareness and sensitization campaigns (community engagements)
- Quick assessments
- COVID-19 responsive technical infrastructure related designs, especially handwashing stations.
- Measures for improving access to WASH and IPC in the light of CAB.

Some key priorities addressed through the compendium are summarised below as recommendations and way forward.

Clear contextualized SOPs, protocols, checklists for safe schools reopening and operation are critical: UNICEF and partners had the opportunity to contribute to the development of national and state level SOPs (customized to the local context). These, SOPs/ guidance, were observed to be useful to provide necessary frameworks, clear guidance, practical checklists/ tools, key strategies, IEC, resource mobilization needs through the school community across different levels. With specific focus on protective measures (during and beyond the school operations) these SOPs were instrumental in developing action plans for safe reopening, CAB and supporting

the decision-making processes (at the school level). Concerned cases in this document may be referred to under the following list:

1. SOP and protocols of safe school reopening, Gujarat
2. SOPs for reopening schools, Jharkhand
3. Checklist for reopening of schools, Maharashtra
4. Safe school reopening compendium (सतरंगों – धनक), Rajasthan.

Capacity building of school-level stakeholders on CAB and WASH/IPC compliance for school reopening: In the initial phase of pandemic, uncertainties and chaos around the ways to address immediate challenges of students wellbeing, ensuring their continued learning at home and capacitating frontline human resource (such as education authorities', teachers, staff, officials and larger school community) were rampant. These challenges were even more pronounced for children in Child Care Institutions (CCIs), protection/ shelter homes etc. and other vulnerable communities. UNICEF and partner organisation extended technical support to respective governments for reaching out to teachers (and support community) at scale with appropriate and updated WASH-IPC trainings/ capacity development initiatives for safe school preparedness at the school and community level. Technical contents of the training/ orientation, were constantly updated, based on global and national guidance/ advisory from time to time.

These capacity building efforts were specially focused on ensuring safe school operations, continued safe learning, wellbeing and protection while including the most marginalised sections on priority. At the national level the DIKSHA platform provided a great opportunity to develop, design, customize and roll out teacher's training module on COVID-19 responsive behaviour for teachers. Furthermore, UNICEF field offices at state level facilitated development and use of customized training contents and resource material in the local context for key WASH-IPC measures to support safe school endeavour. Training/sensitization in general adopted virtual mode (using ICT) to reach out to the stakeholders at scale. These largely stressed on building technical skill, promoting coordinated measures, providing support resource material/ WASH in school toolkits, E-learning material/ App, IEC, along with role clarity of concerned stakeholders for implementation of safe WASH-IPC interventions at the school/ local level (along with certification). Brief on some of the related interventions across different states may be viewed as per the list below:

1. Training module for teachers on COVID-19 responsive behavior
2. WASH in school tool kits for key stakeholders
3. COVID-19 response and preparedness training package for teachers to ensure safe school reopening
4. E-learning materials for teachers, Chhattisgarh
5. Digital training modules to connect with 200,000 teachers, Gujarat
6. Certified teachers for school reopening, Jharkhand
7. Training of service providers and school readiness assessments
8. School safety responses during pandemic, Maharashtra
9. WASH and Protection centered approach for better prevention and control of COVID-19 with a focus on children and women in institutions and vulnerable communities, Maharashtra

10. Water Quality Awareness drive in the schools and anganwadis of Malda, West Bengal

11. Trained NSS cadets help in improving access to mask at local level, Uttar Pradesh

Regular stakeholder engagements through awareness/sensitization campaign: The WASH-IPC measures to contain spread of COVID-19 primarily required local efforts. This implied that regular engagement with the local communities was an essential focus area during lockdown and post lockdown phase. Local engagement was promoted through various means/ platforms/ opportunities such as special drives, observation of special days, events, consultation and Swachhata Pakhwada etc. The case studies showcase that there is a great scope and need to strengthen coordinated local effort by teachers, students, parents/ caregiver, school management committees/ school management and development committees, local panchayati raj institutions (gram panchayats/ urban local bodies) to ensure safe school. Some key related insights may be observed from the following cases:

1. “Teachers of Bihar”, Facebook events for WASH- Bihar
2. Children led situation assessment of school’s “hand hygiene indicators”, Gujarat
3. Apni Suraksha Apne Hath, Campaign, Jharkhand
4. World toilet day 2020 celebrations in schools, Maharashtra
5. Observation of Global Handwash Day/ Week, Maharashtra
6. Boosting the post COVID-19 School reopening with cleanliness as an Entry Point: School Swachhata Pakhwada (Sanitation Fortnight) in Madhya Pradesh “Challenges - a synonym of opportunities”

Quick assessment and regular monitoring of critical area: Assessment, monitoring and evaluation provides critical timely inputs for decision makers at different levels. As the country is particularly vulnerable to various disasters and issues related to climate change, it becomes necessary to engage communities and develop local resilience. Assessments, situation analysis, fact sheets and process documents for safe school priorities proved to be instrumental for prioritizing appropriate COVID-19 response measures and guidance, both in short and long run. Some reference in this compendium can be referred to as per the following list:

1. Joint Rapid Needs Assessment (JRNA) 2021, Bihar
2. Rapid physical observation on School opening preparedness, leading to safe schooling guidance for school, Chhattisgarh
3. WASH Factsheet (schools, anganwadis), Maharashtra
4. Study of ODF/ WASH sustainability in school and AWCs, Maharashtra
5. Training of service providers and school readiness assessment
6. WASH intervention in slum, Rajasthan

Need for promoting and strengthening COVID-19 sensitive, contextual designs: As COVID-19 response for safety, schools required a set of measures which provided greater protection to school community/ users of the school campus. UNICEF advocated these basic requirements in its WASH intervention across different levels (including school/ institution level). These efforts with concerned stakeholders, partners, proved to be helpful in making schools more resilient and prepared for requisite WASH/IPC infrastructure. Evidence in this regard can be viewed as under the following cases in the compendium:

1. COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations designs at the national level

2. COVID-19 sensitive handwashing stations in schools, through CSR support, Bihar
3. COVID -19 sensitive hand washing units, in Madhya Pradesh
4. Minimal Hand Touch Handwashing Stations (MHTHWS) for Schools and Hostels, Odisha

Convergent action to improve access to WASH provisions: While COVID-19 posed unprecedented challenges in many forms for continued safe learning, the pandemic was also utilized to ensure convergent action to improve local WASH provisions (such as water supply in schools/ AWCs with significant coverage improvement, COVID sensitive handwashing stations), and infection control practices at local level. Funding and resource support from several related schemes such as the Fifteen Finance Commission, MGNREGA, DMF, GPDP and CSR were leveraged to address the key WASH priorities at scale. Some of the key references can be viewed in the cases as listed below:

1. 100 days campaign for piped water supply in Schools and other child-related institutions
2. Promoting hand hygiene in a school, Jajpur, Odisha
3. Schools Transformation through WASH in pandemic time.

Whereas these efforts, initiatives and lessons from the selected cases relates to recent pandemic time at different scale, COVID-19 calls for continuous strengthening of related sensitive WASH, infection control provisions and infrastructure along with capacity development for a resilient school community in the long run.