

Monthly Newsletter – Nov 2021

EVENTS

World Toilet Day 2021: Valuing Toilets to Protect Health & Dignity

World Toilet Day was observed on November 19 on the theme 'Valuing Toilets'. The Observance celebrates toilets and raises awareness of the 3.6 billion people living without access to safely managed sanitation. This year the theme drew attention to the fact that toilets – and the sanitation systems that support them – are underfunded, poorly managed, or neglected in many parts of the world, with devastating consequences for health, economics, and the environment, particularly in the poorest and most marginalized communities.



To inspire people to take steps to address the sanitation crisis, Water For People India celebrated World Toilet Day in Anganwadi centres, communities, and schools across West Bengal (Rajnagar, Khoyrasol), Bihar (Sheohar), and Odisha (Ganjam, Khordha). Creative activities were organized to spread the importance of toilet usage through small rallies with

slogans, rangoli art drawing to generate mass awareness, and handwashing steps among students to promote personal hygiene and cleanliness.

Under Project *Mission Sunehra Kal*, Water For People India Trust in collaboration with ITC Limited organized a large-scale awareness campaign on November 18, covering five districts in West Bengal and Odisha. IEC materials including leaflets and banners were designed in regional languages and distributed among the communities. Under the School WASH program, an online painting competition was conducted in government schools across 9 blocks on the theme 'Valuing Toilets'.

In Khoyrasol block, a stall was set up comprising IEC materials and banners reflecting the significance of World Toilet Day followed by an elaborative explanation by a hygiene educator on various aspects of toilets and cleanliness. The program included a drama activity by the BCC team highlighting the need to end the scourge of open defecation and promote sustained toilet usage to educate people from varied age groups.



A quiz competition was conducted with two tableaus moving around 10 gram panchayats spreading awareness on hygiene and clean toilets.

A toilet block was inaugurated at Kairabuni Adibasipara ICDS under Lokepur Gram Panchayat. The Panchayat Pradhan attended the event as a special guest along with the supervisor and ICDS workers. In his welcome remarks, he emphasized the need for O&M and the adoption of sustainability mechanism. For the inaugural event, community people decorated the toilet block beautifully.



In Sheohar, the event was observed from November 19-21 to increase awareness for sustainable sanitation. Film screening was held in Kothiya, Sheohar district, Bihar for community members including Water User Committees, Joint Liability Groups, etc., to promote safe WASH practices and drive home the message on how building a 'toilet' at home brings dignity to everyone. Street art for awareness generation was done by

field facilitators at Belsand Chhatauni road, Sheohar. This was widely covered in local newspapers. A CLAS activity was conducted at Hirrauta Duma, Tariyani block, Ward-06 through social mapping by local community people. Communities also took an oath to regularly use their toilets and keep their surroundings clean.

VISITS

▪ Visit by One Drop Foundation



Ms. Priya John, Country Manager and Ms. Sunayana Wadhawan, SABC Consultant from One Drop Foundation visited Sheohar district, Bihar on November 24 to observe ongoing activities under *Project Sheohar* including social art and storytelling. The visiting team was accompanied by Sheohar team and participated in field testing of the game app *e-Baat* - an initiative to ensure regular monitoring and community involvement towards safe WASH practices. They were apprised about the behaviour change activities such as multidisciplinary shows, street plays, and their impact on the community. A traditional storytelling performance was organized based on a 500-year-old character Natwa Dayal Singh,

who is famous among the rural communities in Sheohar. The storytelling aimed to improve regular toilet usage by male members of the households. Later the local artists shared their field experiences with the visiting team and were appreciative of the various initiatives by Water For People India and One Drop Foundation toward the communities in Sheohar.



IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES

- **Collaboration with PHE Department For Implementation of Project *Jal Swapna***



With an aim to provide tap water to every rural household in West Bengal, the State Government has launched the "*Jal Swapna*" project. The project to supply purified drinking water at each home has been taken up to maintain good health and will benefit residents of two crore rural households.

The project will not only ensure safe drinking water supply to each household but will also help in the further socio-economic development of the rural parts of Bengal. Water for People India Trust, working in West Bengal since 2008 in the field of drinking water and sanitation to reach most vulnerable communities in rural areas will collaborate with PHED for implementation of *Jal Swapna* in the districts of South 24 Parganas and Birbhum and will further expedite the work by dovetailing their funds.

Moreover, the implementation of the project will help to create new employment opportunities for the rural youth that will boost the rural economy especially at a critical time that nosedived due to the nationwide lockdown. The scheme envisages building a pipeline network for two crore houses in five years, at a cost of Rs 58,000 crore. The provision of work to youth and others in villages across the State under the 100 Days' Work Scheme is also part of the scheme.



CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

■ Training on Community Video

Under *The Water Initiative* project, a training session on Community Video was organized for women and girls on November 15 & 23 in Khatkali and Kesharpur villages in Chikhaldara block, Amravati district, Maharashtra. The objective was to form and train a group of 10 women and girls and explain to them the concept of Community Video and how this would help them understand WASH issues in their village. During the training, women, and girls actively participated to educate themselves about Community Video and build their leadership skills.



By supporting the establishment of Community Video in which the disenfranchised produce and distribute

their own locally relevant video programs, Water For People India Trust empowers local communities to lead, connect and change, and then voice their issues to a larger audience. In both the villages, an active group of women and girls have been trained on Community video - a podium to converse important WASH issues of a particular community for overall development. Total 28 participants attended the training.

■ Artist Group Formation for Glove Puppetry

Water For People India Trust organized two training sessions on Glove Puppetry in Chichati and Bela villages in Amravati district, Maharashtra. The training held in the month of October and November aimed to build a group of artists to perform glove puppetry in villages to promote safe WASH practices. The training imparted knowledge on how to make a Glove Puppet, methods to evolve appropriate script, and the right method to present glove puppet show in the community to initiate behaviour change. The process was quite challenging to select youth and to train them as artists.



Total 25 people were selected from both the villages to form two groups and develop themselves as glove puppet artists. During the training, a practice show was organized to provide direct community experience to the group and build their confidence. At the end of the training, youth

participants expressed how the training was a unique opportunity for them to develop a basic understanding of water and build water consciousness amongst the communities in the villages.

- **Orientation of Water User Committees**

Under *The Water Initiative*, a joint partnership between Water For People India Trust and Colgate Palmolive (India) Limited, an orientation session was organized on November 23 for the formation of Water User Committee (WUC) in Kesharpur village, Chikhali GP in Chikhaldara block, Amravati district, Maharashtra. The session aimed to apprise the newly formed WUC on the structure, functions, roles and responsibilities of the members and to develop sustainability mechanisms at household and community



levels. The training also provided information about the functional water supply scheme, water resources management, record keeping, O&M of piped water supply scheme including tariff collection, and water quality management. Total 23 participants (Male-18; Female-5) attended the training. During the training, women members actively participated and were further trained to make well-informed, collective decision implemented by the community members to manage water scarcity issues in their village and maintain the sustainability of water infrastructure through the WUC.
