



Case Studies

# WASH PUNJAB

## **NEW TOILETS, WASH PROGRAMME BOOST NEW ENROLMENTS BY MORE THAN 25%**

Government High School in Kapurthala district can be seen as the best indicator of how better sanitation facilities can change the attitude of the students, teachers and the community towards the school. The school got two separate toilets blocks for the girls and the boys in 2015 under School Sanitation Project (SSP). The initiative only gave the school a distinct look but the subsequent WASH programme gave a new meaning to hygiene and sanitation.



According to Mr Varinderpal Singh, principal of the school, "Before the school got the toilets, there was nothing that we could show to the outside world. The school is building was in a dilapidated state and there a constant fear of students leaving the school for better options."

"But ever since new toilets were built and WASH orientation programme conducted in the school, the school witnessed more than 25 percent increase in new enrollment. The retention rate, especially of girls also went up. The village community responded well to the initiative and takes pride in the fact that the school got so much of attention though these efforts."

The biggest compliment, according to Mr Singh, came from the District Education Officer, who termed the new sanitation units as the best in the entire district.

Many girls in the school admit that they are coming regularly to the school after the construction of the toilets. "Earlier there would be a long queue in front of the old toilet which would consume lot of time of the students. Some of my friends would hesitate to use the urinal because of its unhygienic conditions", said onePayal, a class seventh student.

Lapreet Kaur said that the old toilet had no roof. Due to this, the girl students would avoid using that during rains and winters. "The new toilets brought new relief to us girls", she said.

The school also took the ownership and covered the entire open area with tiles so that the new toilets don't get dirty. The school also planted flowers around the new toilets as part of beatification drive in the school. The school students and teachers also participated in the WASH orientation programs to give boost to proper Hygiene practices.

## SCHOOL SETS UP “SWACCHTA CLUB” FOR CHILD TO CHILD APPROACH ON SANITATION

After the construction of the new toilet, the Government Primary School Afzullapur in Ludhiana district has earned the title of “Model School” in the region, the way it adopted the best hygiene and sanitation practices in the school.

All this could become possible because of active participation by the head teacher Ms Kirandeep Kaur who promoted actively WASH activities in the school. The school set up a “Swatchhta Club” to propagate the proper hygiene and sanitation practices and regular maintenance of toilet and monitoring of cleanliness in the school campus. The club ensures that the students get lessons on the benefits of the safe sanitation regularly.

The major component of the “Swatchhta Club” is child to child approach wherein the senior students teach the younger ones lessons on safe sanitation practices and personal hygiene. The club has student volunteers who are engaged in regular monitoring of the sanitation facilities and the cleanliness within the school campus. The school regularly organizes painting competitions on safe sanitation to provide sustainability to the WASH programme.

The importance of the safe disposal of human excreta and hand-washing with soap as critical public health interventions for rural and urban communities is undisputed. The school didn't have a separate girls unit in the school. With only one WC present that was being frequented by both girls & boys, it had created an untidy situation in school which increased the risk of getting Urinary tract infections especially for the girls. One of the key factors of low gender ratio in the school has been the unavailability of separate toilets.

Ms Kirandeep says that all such efforts have resulted in dramatic increase in the attendance as the students no longer fall sick as frequently they would due to lack of awareness and inadequate sanitation facilities. The WASH activities by SACH team have brought about positive changes not only in the school but within the community also. This has inspired the village sarpanch to take the initiative to the village and make the community aware of the benefits of adopting safe sanitation.



*“Almost every child reaches their puberty by the time his/her primary education is completed and it is very important that privacy while using toilet is there especially to the girls who tend to drop out of education because of such reasons. The WASH program by SACH has helped us in mobilizing our students in fun way towards practicing good hygiene”*

**Mrs Kiran Deep Kaur**  
School Principal

## SCHOOL CRP, STUDENT VOLUNTEERS CHANGE THE SANITATION SCENARIO IN SCHOOL

One of the major innovations that SACH envisaged during the implementation of the WASH programme in Punjab was a greater focus on the roles and the responsibilities of the community resource persons. One such resource person who made in a difference and managed to bring about behavioral change among the students is ...of Government High School Darapur in Moga District.

RamandeepKuar is a computer teacher in the school and the member of School Sanitation Management Committee (SSMC) voluntarily chose to work as school CRP whose passion for the school sanitation and hygiene turned things around with in the school campus. Before SACH intervention thorough SSP and WASH, the poor hygienic conditions would force many students, especially the girls to stay away from the school. There were frequent instances of open defecation outside the school.



But after the school got the new toilets and the regular WASH orientation programs by SACH, things began to change. The efforts by Ramandeepnot only brought about a behavioral change among the students with the help of the students volunteers, but also trained a village CRP who is also a school staff on safe sanitation practices.

The school soon witnessed a transformation. While on one hand the students learnt the basic hygiene practices, on the other it addressed several key issues such as dropout rate, girls missing classes on account of inadequate sanitation facilities and the open defecation.

According to the principal of the school, "The new toilet and the WASH activities have paved the way to new mindset in the school which was missing earlier."

The message has also percolated to the village community. Today, ...Kaur is not only working passionately with the SACH team but also make the fellow villagers aware of clean surroundings.

## CRP TRANSMITTING SAFE HYGIENE MESSAGES FROM SCHOOL TO COMMUNITY



One of the innovations that SACH made during the WASH programme was the formation of SSMCs wherein the roles and responsibilities of CRPs were carefully drafted. The idea was to make people take the ownership of the initiative which unarguably is one of the biggest in the state.

**Paramajit Kaur**, 35, is school staff in government high school Darapur in Moga district who has witnessed all the WASH activities conducted by SACH team in the school. Before this, she was never exposed to the scientific methods of cleanliness and safe sanitation. But the regular interaction with SSMC motivated her to do something in her own village.

She acted as a bridge between the school and the village and is now cooperating with the village sarpanch to educate the community on the importance of cleanliness and how it can reduce the health burden on the families. She is helping the panchayat organize clean village campaigns from time to time.

Her efforts have brought about positive change in the behavior of the village people towards safe sanitation practices. According to paramjit Kaur, the major health issues in the village are directly related to cleanliness. She said that even she was not aware of this.

*"Most satisfying thing for me is that children I interact with are the same as children in school. I know their parents who listen to me on the health issues that are discussed with SACH team and the school staff."*



## INSPIRED BY SSP, WASH PROJECTS, SARPANCH LAUNCHES CLEAN VILLAGE CAMPAIGN



**Rafdeep Singh Sanga**, sarpanch of the Darapur village in Moga district has demonstrated how one can transform the community if he/she works with dedication and has the ability to inspire others. Mr Sanga has been associated with SACH since the beginning of the construction of the sanitation units in the village school.

After seeing the high quality of the toilets with most modern facilities and the subsequent WASH activities, he decided that he should also contribute to this initiative. He realized how small but scientific approach can protect the people from health related issues. He admitted that after the school got the toilets, the dropout rate, especially of girls has decreased.

So, he started consulting other panchayat members and the community people for launching a cleanliness drive (SwachhtaMuhim) in the village under the guidance of SACH team. For this, he formed a team to monitor the areas that should be addressed on the priority basis and then pooled resources to implement the programme.

The first thing that he did was to get the open drains cleaned which normally get clogged during the rainy season. The people were also oriented on the issues related to environment with focus on cutting down on the use of plastic bags which are normally thrown into the drains. Next on the agenda was the removal of heaps of garbage in the village.

He is all praise for SACH for constructing new toilets and carrying out WASH activities in the school and within the community. *"If the students, teachers and the village people are aware of the safe sanitation, the credit goes to SACH which led these efforts"*, he said

## HOW NEW TOILET AND WASH ACTIVITIES PREVENTED GIRLS ABSENTEEISM

The government High school Maheshwari in Moga district has a reason to cheer as the retention rate of the girls in the school has increased after the construction of the toilets and the WASH activities. Earlier, the girls would regular miss their classes due to inadequate, unhygienic sanitation conditions of the sanitation facilities and lack of awareness on sanitation, particularly during menstruation. Another problem that the students faced was the long queue in front of the old toilet which did not have adequate capacity.



But the situation has drastically changed after the school got the new toilets blocks which was followed by orientation of the students on safe sanitation practices. According to Ms Amar Kumari, principal of the school, "though I was aware that the chief reason behind the girls missing their classes was poor sanitation infrastructure, we were helpless as government funds were inadequate to address this problem."

But after the intervention by SACH and HDFC Bank Ltd through School Sanitation and WASH projects, the situation has improved a lot. Now, these efforts not only put a check on the absenteeism of girls in the school, it also prevented open defecation.

A girl student of the school said how she and her friends are keen to attend the school every day without feeling shy of using the sanitation facilities in the schools. She admits that merely physical structure is not enough. "Proper use of these facilities, personal hygiene and cleanliness also matters."

The school has two student volunteers and teachers in the School Sanitation who have attended WASH training facilitated by SACH which had an overpowering impact on the attendance of the girl student.



253, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Shahpur Jat, New Delhi-110049  
Telephone: +91 11 4056 2549, 4611 4888, Email: [contactus@sachindia.org](mailto:contactus@sachindia.org)  
[www.sachindia.org](http://www.sachindia.org)