

# Enhancing WASH in Schools in Rajasthan, India

Making it child-friendly,  
gender-responsive  
& climate-resilient

2018-22



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- COVID-19 Response through strengthening hand washing with soap services in Schools and co-located anganwadi centres in Udaipur and Dungarpur Districts for Rajasthan, July to December 2022
- Enhancing WASH services in Schools through child-friendly, gender-sensitive and geo-climate responsive interventions in Rajasthan August-November 2021.

**Centre for Advocacy and Research**

- Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR) for 2020-21 on WASH intervention in urban slums of Jaipur city in the context of COVID-19.

**Nehru Foundation for Development Centre for Environment Education**

- COVID-19 Response through strengthening hand Washing with soap services in Schools and co-located anganwadi centres in Barmer and Jaisalmer Districts for Rajasthan, August to November 2021.

**VINYAS Society**

- Co-creation of child-friendly, gender-responsive, climate-resilient WASH in Schools in Rajasthan, 2019-22.

**Disclaimer:** Due care has been taken to highlight and represent the information on ground. However, if there is any oversight or misrepresentation, it will be duly corrected in the revised edition after due checking and follow up on ground.

This document has been developed as a part of the partnership with ACE from July 2022 to December 2022.

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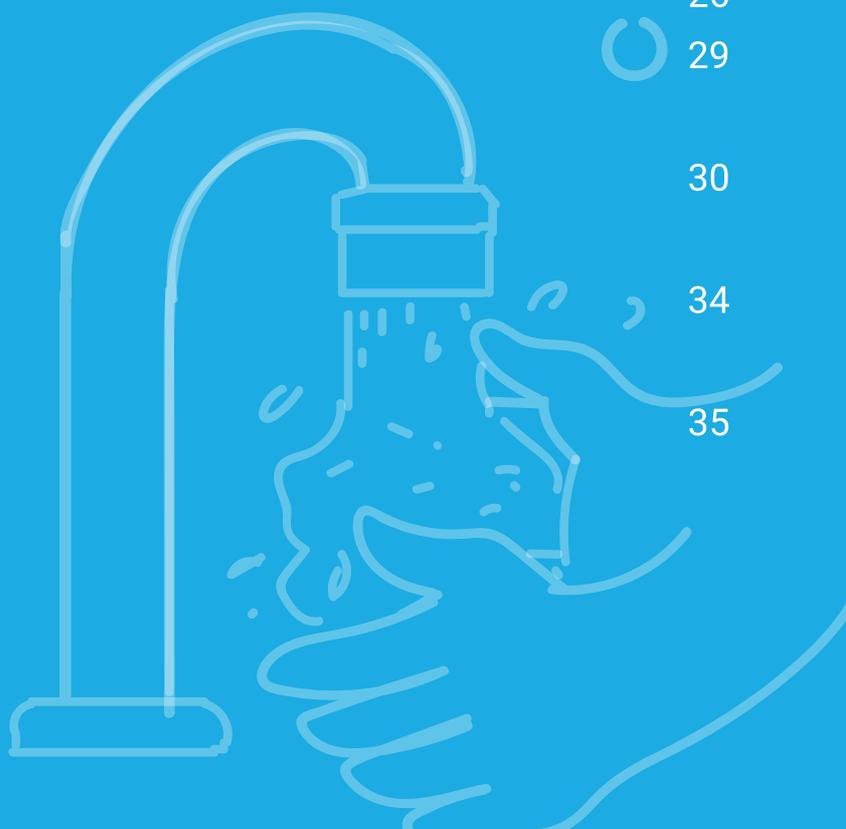
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# 1. Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACE	Action for Community Empowerment	SAP	Swachhata Action Plan
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report	SBCC	Social and Behaviour Change Communication
AWC	Anganwadi Centre	SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission
BADP	Border Area Development Programme	SBM-G	Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin
CAB	COVID-19 Appropriate Behaviour	SBSV	Swachh Bharat, Swachh Vidyalaya
CEE	Centre for Environment Education	SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
CFAR	Centre for Advocacy and Research	SMC	School Management Committee
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	SmSA	Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan
CwSN	Children with Special Needs	SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
HH4A	Hand Hygiene for All	SSP	Safe School Protocol
HWS	Hand-washing with Soap	SVP	Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar
JJM	Jal Jeevan Mission	SWASHT-R	School WASH in Tribal ñ Rajasthan
MDM	Mid-day Meals	ToC	Theory of Change
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	UDISE+	Unified District Information System for Education Plus
MHM	Menstrual Hygiene Management	WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development	WHO	World Health Organization
MoE	Ministry of Education	WinS	WASH in Schools
NAS	National Achievement Survey	WSDP	Whole School Development Plan
NEP	New Education Policy		
NGO	Non-government Organization		
O&M	Operation and Maintenance		
PEEO	Panchayat Education Extension Officer		
PHED	Public Health Engineering Department		
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions		
RCScE	Rajasthan Council for School Education		





## 2. Executive Summary

Let us take a moment to consider the achievements of WASH in schools in Rajasthan, a journey that began in the early 2000s and has overcome various development, socio economic, and geographic challenges. During this time, the state witnessed progressive shifts in policy, programmes and the operational environment. From small-scale pilot projects conducted by UNICEF that were focused on improving water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure to a more diversified set of technical and advocacy inputs. The dedicated efforts and singular focus on creating a child-friendly, gender-sensitive and climate-resilient WASH in Schools (WinS) programme improved hygiene and sanitation and had a cascading effect on health, nutrition and education.

It was observed that the availability of WinS was complemented by positive changes in WASH behaviour among children -- using the toilet, handwashing with soap, personal hygiene, and maintaining cleanliness in schools and their surroundings. Modelled as healthy, positive practices, these actions were then replicated in their homes and amplified by the communities. The impact on the education and mental well-being of the children is a crucial outcome of the WinS initiative, it improved the attendance of young children and adolescent girls who were most disadvantaged by the lack of child-friendly and gender-friendly toilet facilities. It also ensured that the students had access to functional and accessible WASH facilities, which upheld their right to a dignified learning environment.

UNICEF's long-standing partnership with the Government of Rajasthan, has been crucial in the implementation and promotion of WinS in the region. Along with the support of the partners, UNICEF's approach in Rajasthan is congruent with the national programmes and guidelines as well as UNICEF's national strategy, and the various surveys and reviews. This included the bottleneck analysis, which informed the theory of change, the gender immersion report, WASH benchmarking, which resulted in action plans and interventions like Swachh Bharat, Swachh Vidyalaya (SBSV). Under SBSV, the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) was a novel way to help the education department improve the quality of WASH facilities in schools by strengthening the role of the school management committees (SMCs), the students, staff, and community in the improvement and maintenance of WASH facilities.

Access to safe WinS means that children who are otherwise disadvantaged now have the chance to secure quality education, good health and adequate nutrition to participate in school and other activities. In the case of Rajasthan, we have observed how children become changemakers, and the messages of good WASH behaviour travels beyond the walls of the school and into the community, neighbouring villages, and across districts. This report gives us the opportunity to zoom out and survey the achievements, dwell on the challenges, and take pause before we consider the needs and priorities of the state and its people, to strengthen their WASH needs for the future.

Access to safe WinS means that children who are otherwise disadvantaged now have the chance to secure quality education, good health and adequate nutrition, to participate in school and other activities.

### 3. Introduction to WinS

Water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) are fundamental to human health, well-being, and dignity. Access to safe water, adequate sanitation, and good hygiene practices is critical for preventing disease and reducing the burden of illness, particularly among children and women. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), lack of access to WASH services is a leading cause of mortality and morbidity worldwide, affecting over two billion people. In Rajasthan, one of India's largest and most populous states, the WASH situation remains challenging, with diverse geographies and significant disparities in access and quality of services.

#### Impact of WASH in Schools

- ▶ Reduce drop out and absenteeism and encourages transition to higher grades
- ▶ Help ensure quality education: healthy and well-nourished children can fully participate in schooling and gain its maximum benefits. Quality education, in turn, leads to better health and nutrition outcomes with positive implications for girls.
- ▶ Enhance children's pride in their schools and communities by providing dignity and privacy.
- ▶ Enable children to become agents of change for improving WASH practices in their families and communities.
- ▶ Create awareness regarding environment sustainability and climate change.
- ▶ Ensure investment in school children and the health of future generations.
- ▶ Provide healthy, safe, and secure school environments that can protect children from health hazards, abuse and exclusion, especially for girl students.

Access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene in schools is essential for ensuring that children have a healthy and conducive learning environment. The UNICEF WASH in schools (WinS) initiative recognizes the importance of addressing WASH issues in schools and has been working to improve the situation across Rajasthan. The WinS initiative has been mindful of focusing on behaviour change among students, who also act as agents of change for their families and communities. By promoting good hygiene practices, such as handwashing with soap and water, and providing access to clean drinking water and functional toilets, the WinS initiative aims to create a healthy and safe school environment that promotes learning and development.

Rajasthan has achieved several important milestones in the journey towards providing better WASH facilities and improving hygiene behaviour in the state. Since 2005, through concerted efforts and progressive and consistent engagement by the government, non-government organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, the state has made significant improvements in WASH services, particularly in schools. The launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission - Grameen (SBM-G) in October 2014 and Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in August 2019, was a significant landmark, a turning point in Rajasthan's sanitation and water journey, triggering rapid progress with regard to sanitation and water coverage. By December 2021-22, Rajasthan had declared that the 104,198 government schools had gender-segregated toilets, and 98 per cent had drinking water facilities available within the school premises.

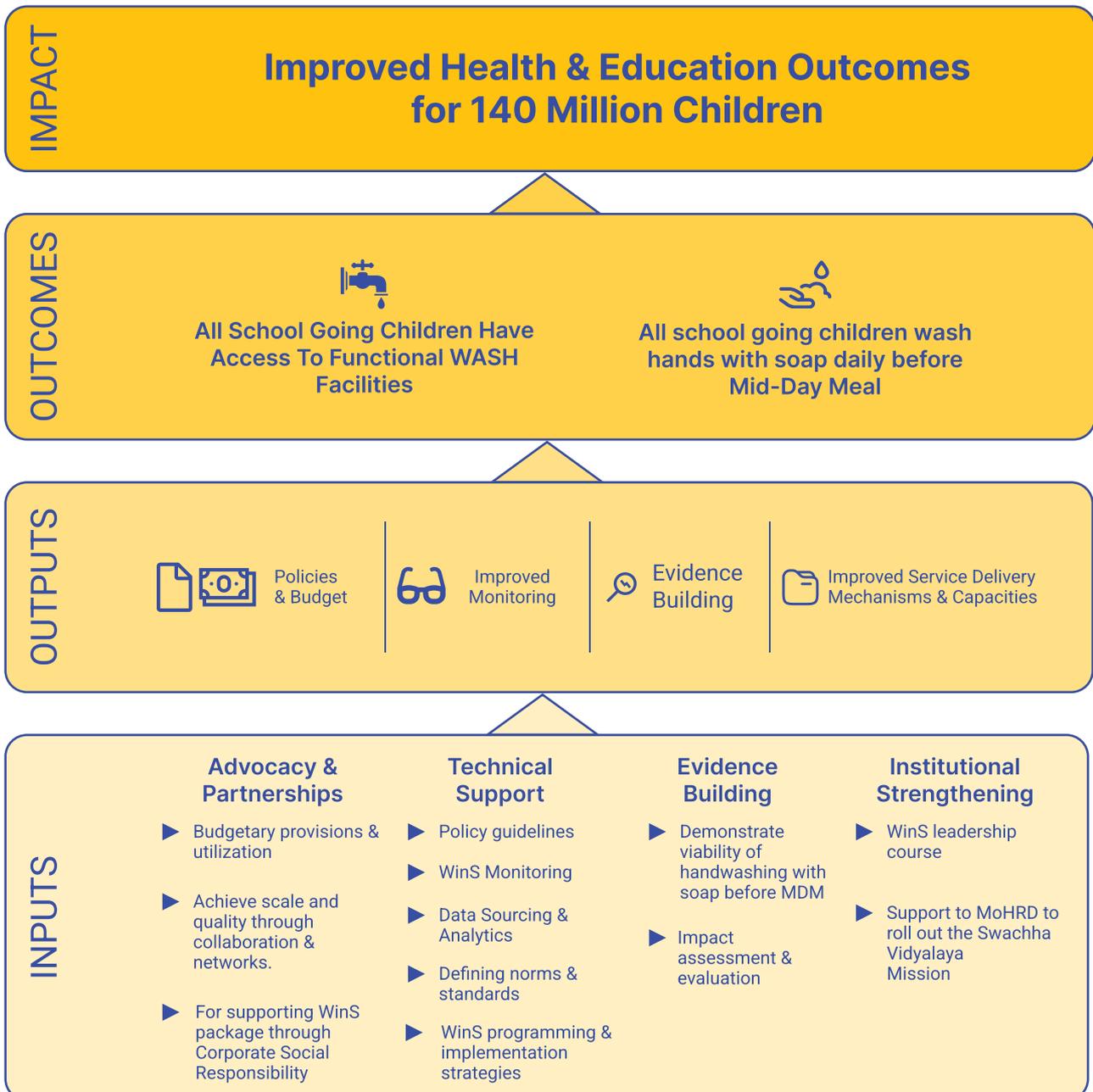
The availability of WASH infrastructure paved the way for positive changes in WASH behaviour of the students, such as the use of toilets, handwashing with soap at critical times, personal hygiene, and cleanliness in school. In this report, we examine the work of UNICEF in Rajasthan in the last five years to improve WASH outcomes for children and women, and identify lessons learned and best practices for future action.

### 3.1. Theory of Change

In 2015, the WinS Theory of Change (ToC) defined UNICEF’s strategic inputs and the desired impact. Two major areas that have the potential to change education, nutrition and health outcomes for over 110 million school going children in over 1.4 million schools in India, were identified. These were:

- Promoting sustained handwashing behaviour change among students, especially before school meals, implemented through the Mid-day Meal programme;
- Advocacy and technical support to state governments for improving operations and management aspects, including budgetary allocations.

In Rajasthan, UNICEF shares a long-standing partnership with the state government in promoting WinS. The support in Rajasthan has evolved from the initial small-scale pilot projects focused on improving WASH infrastructure to a more diversified set of technical and advocacy inputs. Learnings from pilot projects have informed policy decisions and programme directions. UNICEF’s current approach in Rajasthan is congruent with the national programmes and guidelines as well as the UNICEF national strategy, as derived from the bottleneck analysis and the subsequent theory of change, and contextualized to meet the specific needs of the state.



# 4. UNICEF's WinS Portfolio in Rajasthan

## A Journey in Time

### 2000-06: Agenda Setting

School health and sanitation programme piloted in Alwar, Tonk and Jhalawar districts with UNICEF support

A dedicated school water sanitation and hygiene education (SWSHE) cell established with UNICEF support within the RCEE to provide technical and pedagogy support for upholding of WASH in school initiatives

### 2014-17: Consolidation & Upscaling

O&M budget i.e. school sanitation grant for WASH facilities in the state institutionalized by the state.

SWASTH-R project piloted in 750 schools demonstrates the viability of group handwashing stations with soap and improved handwashing practices

WASH practices mainstreamed in the concept of Utkarsh and Utkrisht Vidyalayas

Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya rolled out in the state

School benchmarking on WASH indicators started

State-level Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar instituted

### 2006-14: Expansion & Diversification

- ▶ Education department co-opted as a member of the state water and sanitation mission
- ▶ Technical guidelines developed and capacity building programmes developed
- ▶ Cost-effective, child-friendly model for force lift pumps piloted in Tonk and upscaled to cover 10,000 schools across the state
- ▶ SWSHE scaled up across the state

### 2018-22: Coverage, Improvements, Sustainability and COVID -19 Response

- ▶ Gender-responsive and climate-resilient WASH installations are strengthened
- ▶ Infrastructure and capacity for menstrual hygiene management improved
- ▶ Chief Minister of Rajasthan led Global Hand-washing Day 2020 celebrations, reaching all gram panchayats, to highlight the importance of hand-washing with soap
- ▶ COVID-19 response through development of a comprehensive compendium contributing to SOPs on safe reopening of schools released by the Govt. of Rajasthan
- ▶ Design, innovation and installation of child-friendly COVID-appropriate hand-washing stations across Rajasthan, as COVID-19 response strategy
- ▶ Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-2022 rolled out, incorporating COVID-19 prevention guidelines
- ▶ Initiation of Rajasthan's roadmap on hand hygiene for all, in the process

## 4.1. 2000 to 2017

The WinS intervention has witnessed progressive shifts in the policies, programmatic interventions, and operational environments at the national and state levels. This was made possible by following the legal and policy recommendations and taking operational measures to implement them on ground. Furthermore, the benchmarks for WinS as prescribed under the Swachh Bharat, Swachh Vidyalaya (SBSV) intervention and the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) has helped the education department strengthen the quality of WASH facilities in schools.

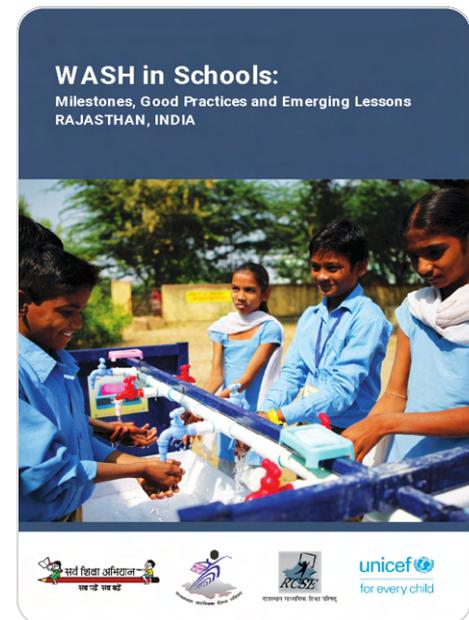
The intervention also helped in strengthening the role of school management committees (SMCs) and the communities, in the improvement and maintenance of WASH facilities, thereby encouraging people's participation in their own well-being. Over years of dedicated efforts, UNICEF has developed a considerable body of work under the WinS initiative.

The initiative was focussed on creating behaviour change among students who also act as agents of change amidst their family and community. Students, teachers and officials reflected positively in the first national benchmarking exercise on WinS in 2016-17, and Rajasthan was among the top three states to secure the SVP. The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2016, for Rajasthan suggests that there was a leap in functionality of toilets in schools, as compared to the survey of 2014. The National Achievement Survey (NAS) 2017 has also acknowledged that Rajasthan's performance in learning outcomes had improved along with an improvement in retention, fresh enrolment and reverse migration from private to government schools was also observed.

A bottleneck analysis for WinS was undertaken by UNICEF in 2014, which highlighted that despite a sound policy environment and fairly high access to facilities such as toilets and drinking water in schools, there was scope to address the functionality of the existing WASH infrastructure, the budget deficits, and the gaps in the data. The supply of soap, maintenance of WASH facilities, funds for operation and maintenance (O&M), and poor handwashing behaviour, especially handwashing with soap before meals and after defecation also emerged as major bottlenecks. Subsequently, two major areas were identified with the potential to change education, health and nutrition outcomes by promoting hand-washing among students, and advocating and providing technical support to state governments to improve O&M, and budgetary allocations.

In Rajasthan, the programme has evolved from a small-scale pilot project focussed on improving sanitation infrastructure to a diversified set of technical and advocacy inputs. UNICEF's current approach in Rajasthan is congruent with the national programmes and guidelines as well as UNICEF's national strategy, as derived from the bottleneck analysis and the subsequent theory of change, contextualised to meet the specific needs and aspirations of the state.

The Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) was instituted in 2016-17 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Department of School Education and Literacy, Government of India to recognize, inspire and celebrate excellence in sanitation and hygiene practice in schools. The explicit purpose of the award was to honour the schools that have undertaken significant steps towards fulfilling the mandate of the Swachh Vidyalaya Campaign.

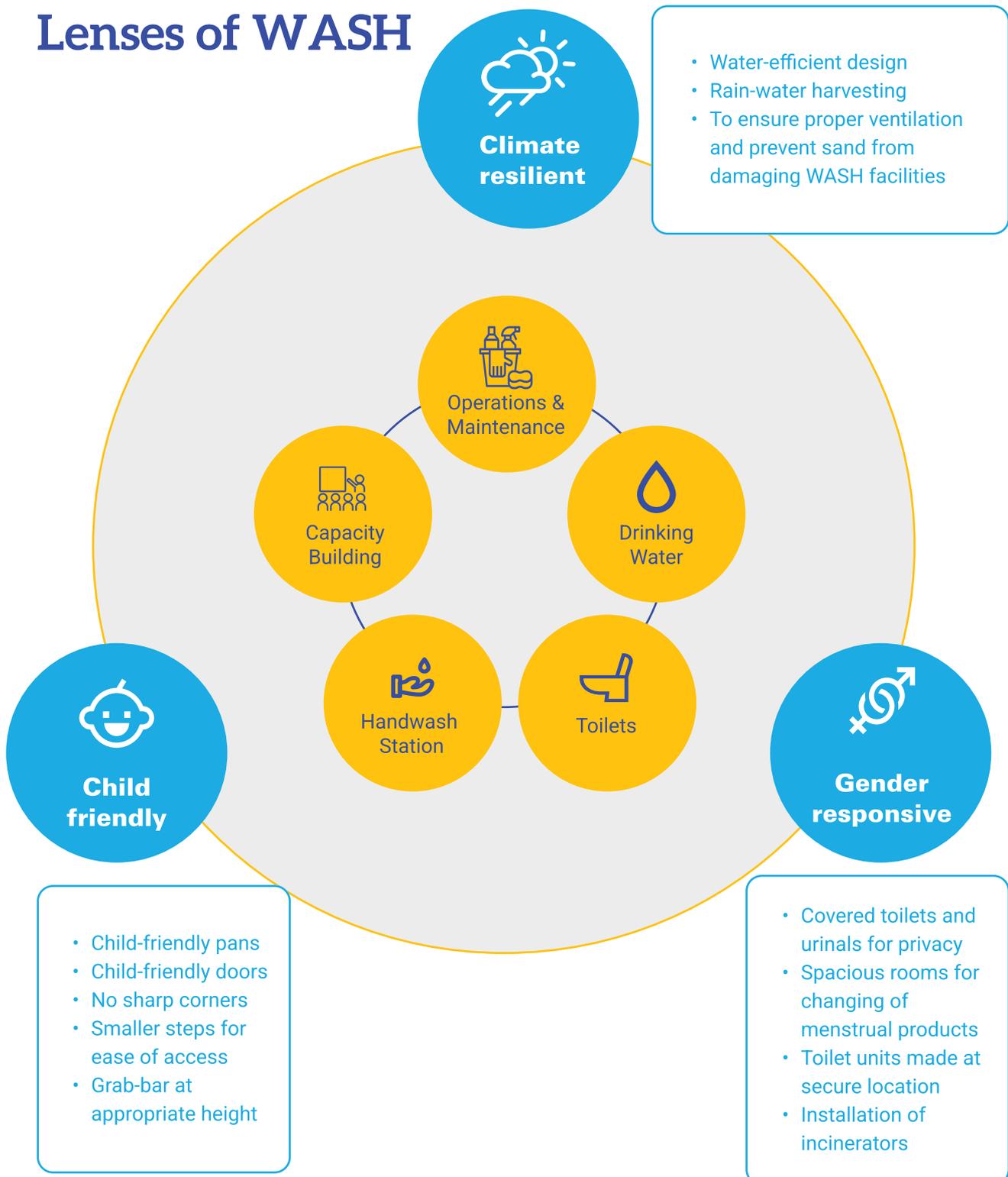


*The document captures important milestones of WinS policy and programming in India and Rajasthan till 2017.*

## 4.2 2018 to 2022

Between the years 2018 and 2022, UNICEF along with the Samagra Siksha Abhiyan, School Education Department, and partners worked together with teachers, students, parents, and communities to enhance various aspects of WASH within school settings. This encompassed elements such as ensuring safe water, gender-segregated sanitation facilities, promoting hand hygiene through hand washing with soap, strengthening operation and maintenance, and capacity building. To further enhance accessibility, UNICEF in Rajasthan adopted a multi-faceted approach that emphasized elements of child-friendliness, climate-resilience, and gender-responsiveness. These perspectives proved pivotal in dismantling barriers and rendering WASH amenities more readily available to diverse groups of children.

### Lenses of WASH



# 5. Major Activities from 2018 to 2022

## Advocacy and Partnership

- ▶ Mainstreaming menstrual hygiene management
- ▶ Development of Swachha Action Plan
- ▶ WASH-based benchmarking
- ▶ CM led Global Handwashing Day celebration (2020)
- ▶ Leveraged resources from corporates for installation of incinerators as a part of CSR
- ▶ Government allocated dedicated funds for clean and green schools (2021-22)

## Technical Support

- ▶ Development of menstrual hygiene management module and training package (2018)
- ▶ Planning and implementation of Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2017-18 and 2021-22
- ▶ Holistic development of children and strengthening local knowledge for environmental sustainability guidelines (2022)
- ▶ School reopening guidelines during COVID-19 (2020)
- ▶ Developed roadmap on hand hygiene for all for Rajasthan (2022)
- ▶ Development of clean and green school guidelines (2022)

## Evidence Building

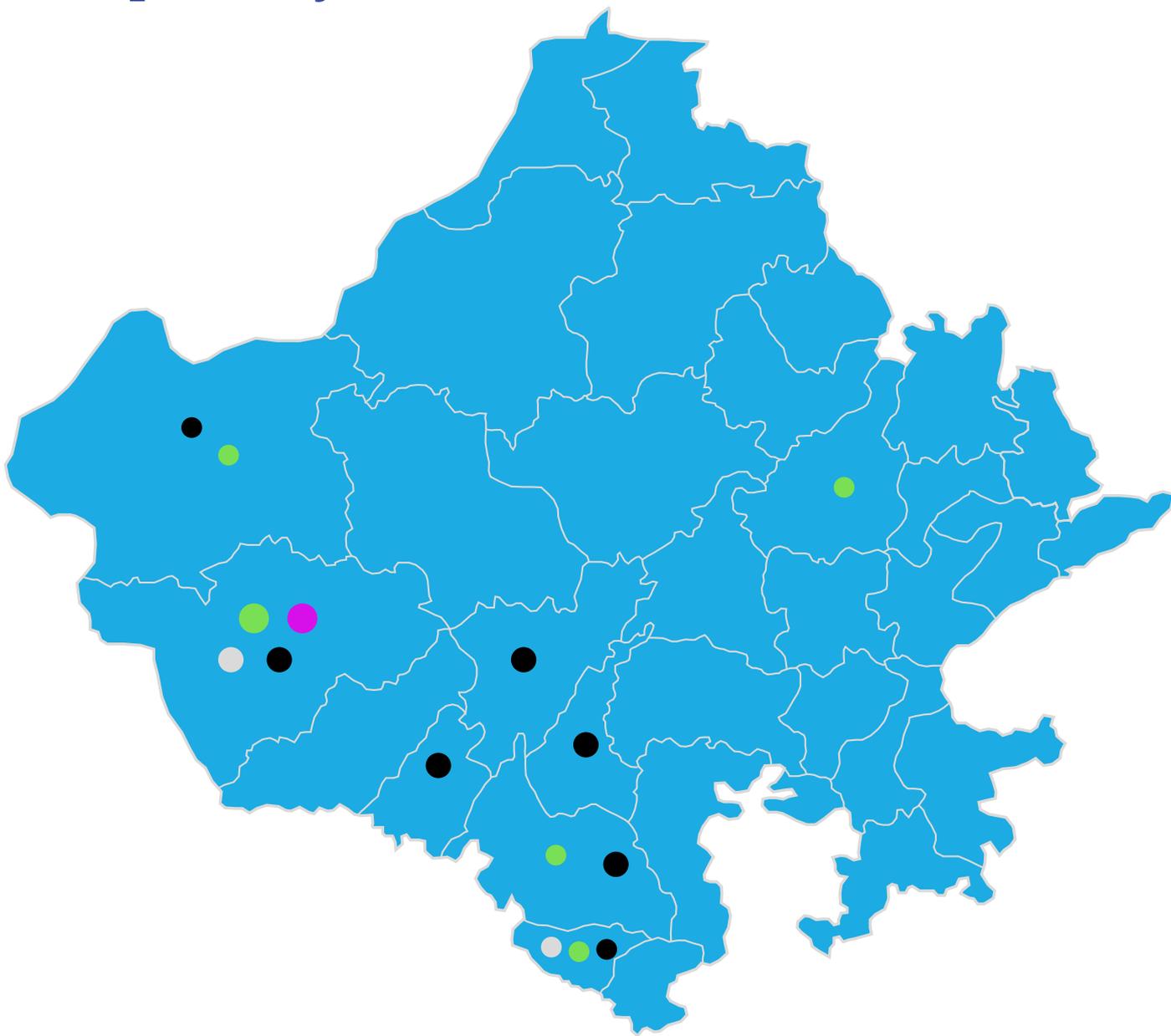
- ▶ Immersion visit to understand gaps in WinS facilities and services to make it gender responsive (2019)
- ▶ Development of low-cost foot-operated age-appropriate handwashing unit for COVID-19 response (2021)
- ▶ Demonstrated pilot on child-friendly, gender-responsive, climate resilient WASH in Schools in 10 schools of Barmer and Dungarpur districts (2020-2022)

## Institutional Strengthening

- ▶ Development of manuals on child-friendly, gender-responsive, climate-resilient WinS
- ▶ Build capacities of teachers, child-cabinets, SMC, and janitors, senior officials, master trainer, CSRs, NGOs, engineers, on key aspects of WinS



# Map of Major Activities from 2018 to 2022



- 
- State level workshop on child-friendly, gender-responsive, climate-resilient WASH in schools
- 
- Gender responsive field immersion visit.
- 
- Co-creating child-friendly, gender-responsive, climate-resilient WASH in schools
- 
- Costed SAP
- 
- Installation of CAB handwashing unit
- 
- Support in Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar
- 

*Note: This map does not reflect the position of UNICEF on the legal status of any country or territory or the delimitation of any frontiers.*

## 5.1 State workshop on costed SAPs, climate-responsive and gender-sensitive WinS

Costed Swachhata Action Plans (SAPs) are comprehensive plans developed through a participatory process that involve all stakeholders in a school. They include a detailed budget and timeline for improving cleanliness and maintenance practices, such as access to safe drinking water, functional toilets, handwashing with soap, and effective waste management.



*Isabelle Bardem-Sévédé, Chief of Jaipur Field Office, inaugurates the state-level workshop on climate-resilient and gender-sensitive WASH in Schools.*

In May 2018, UNICEF Rajasthan and the Department of School Education, Government of Rajasthan, organized a workshop to address key issues related to WASH in schools. The workshop focused on the importance of WinS, the costed Swachhata Action Plan (SAP), and gender-responsive and climate-responsive WinS.

The workshop held in 2018, marked a significant milestone in UNICEF Rajasthan's efforts to improve WinS. The discussions and recommendations that emerged from the workshop provided the impetus for a series of initiatives and interventions aimed at promoting WinS across the state. Over the next five years, UNICEF Rajasthan implemented a range of programmes and activities based on the principles and strategies outlined in the workshop, including the development and implementation of costed SAPs, the integration of child-friendly and gender-responsive approaches into WASH programming, and the adoption of climate-sensitive measures in schools located in the desert and tribal regions. In this report, we examine the outcomes and impact of these initiatives and assess their contribution to improving WASH in schools in Rajasthan.

Another important aspect of UNICEF Rajasthan's WinS initiative was the integration of gender-sensitive approaches into programming. This involved ensuring equal access to WASH facilities for girls and boys and promoting menstrual hygiene practices for girls. UNICEF Rajasthan also supported the formation of school-based WASH committees that included students, teachers, and parents, to promote good hygiene practices and monitor the implementation of WASH activities.

In addition to these interventions, UNICEF Rajasthan also adopted climate-responsive measures in schools located in the desert and tribal regions. This involved promoting climate-responsive WASH facilities which can sustain the extreme climatic conditions that have led to dysfunctionality of the facilities, especially in water scarce conditions. UNICEF Rajasthan also supported the construction of low-cost, climate-responsive toilets that are appropriate for the local conditions.

## 5.2 Gender-responsive WinS in Rajasthan

Building on the work initiated by UNICEF Rajasthan on gender and climate-responsive WinS, an immersion visit was conducted in August 2019. The objective of the immersion visit was to have a shared understanding of WASH facilities in schools with a focus on girls' toilets in Barmer, a district that suffers from water scarcity and is representative of the desert typology. The learnings helped to understand the next steps that would become important to furthering the work on gender-responsive WinS in Rajasthan. For the immersion visit, schools were selected by the education department to cover certain key issues like remoteness in access, range of school types covering primary and secondary sections, a mix of co-ed and all-girl schools, minority-dominated schools, schools operating in temporary premises, and schools having received corporate social responsibility (CSR) funds for WASH infrastructure.

Tools and checklists were developed in a consultative process, which was reviewed and strengthened prior to the immersion visit. The approach included interactions with adolescent girls, boys, teachers, and SMC members, and observing WASH facilities. The key observations that emerged from the field visits were the availability, access, and adequacy of WASH infrastructure. In the desert area, the availability of water was unreliable and the community depended on local water sources. Separate sanitation facilities for girls and boys were needed and the need for cleanliness was a recurring theme. In a few schools, the number of toilets available for the students was not in proportion to the number of girls and boys, female and male teachers, dysfunctional toilets further skewed the ratio. Infrastructural maintenance was severely lacking and if something went into disrepair, it was not fixed.

Interaction with boys on MHM revealed the need for more engagement through a sensitive and inclusive approach. Boys in the pre-adolescent age group (10-12 years) were not aware about the menstrual cycle, whereas, most of the boys in the adolescent age group (13-18 years) were aware but were uncomfortable expressing their views. The girls group mentioned that they feel more comfortable discussing their personal hygiene issues with women teachers in the school. In a couple of the schools it was noted that there were no woman teachers, which was a disabling factor for girls. Sanitary pads were available and freely distributed in every school visited, however, almost universally, a disposal system like a dustbin or an incinerator was missing.

Once the gender immersion report was complete, the team devised a way forward that included advocacy and action that will aid in making WinS gender and climate responsive. This would be done through system strengthening, advocacy for the allocation of more funds for O&M and its efficient utilisation, and effective monitoring and design innovations.

“My classmates and I are overjoyed by the changes that have been implemented in the school. We finally have a gender-friendly toilet. I am no longer afraid to use the toilet while I’m at school which makes me feel more confident and allows me to focus on my education without any stress or distractions.”

Surabhi Raut, student, 12-years-old



Gender-responsive

WinS

## 5.3 Model of child-friendly, gender-responsive, climate-resilient WinS

Building on this visit, UNICEF Rajasthan started working on co-creating model schools with child-friendly, gender-responsive, and climate-sensitive WASH facilities in 10 schools of Barmer and Dungarpur. This was done through a planned approach of developing a whole school development (WSD) plan, which was developed in consultation with students, teachers, and SMCs. This bottom-up approach led to more ownership of facilities by students and teachers.

The WSD plans were created to ensure that WASH facilities are accessible to all, including children (above 3 years), adolescent girls, and children with special needs. The plans account for the geo-climatic conditions of the area, and the specific needs of girls with regards to MHM, privacy, ventilation, and adequate space. The WSD plans also focussed on the installation of handwashing units at different heights to ensure that they were accessible to children across various age groups. Additionally, water storage units were installed to ensure reliable water supply. This approach had a positive impact on the health and education of children in Rajasthan.



*The design of the gender-responsive girls' toilet in Government UPS Godhmaudi, Aspur Block, Dungarpur.*

For more information go through compendium on child-friendly, gender-sensitive, and climate-resilient WinS.



## 5.4 WASH benchmarking and development of the SAP

To enhance WinS, UNICEF Rajasthan conducted a state-level orientation and district-level orientation in Jaisalmer, Barmer, Sirohi, Pali, Rajasmand, Udaipur, and Dungarpur on costed SAP and school safety. Along with the school education department, UNICEF provided technical support in benchmarking exercises and prepared an SAP for each district. The SAP contained a detailed analysis of the existing situation in schools with regard to water supply and drinking water, toilets and their functionality, handwashing with soap, O&M of facilities, and capacity building & behaviour change. The SAP also identified gaps in the existing infrastructure and behaviour, and a comprehensive plan was prepared to address these gaps. The plan included the estimated cost, responsibilities for implementation, and timeline for completion.

The SAP is an important tool that can help teachers guide the planning efforts of the school education department towards achieving its goal of improving WASH and sanitation facilities. Identifying the existing gaps and planning for their improvement, ensures that the schools have access to safe and clean water, toilets, and handwashing facilities. Combined with the proper management of solid and liquid waste, the team was able to ensure that the schools are clean and healthy.

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August 2020: before WinS intervention

## 5.5 Capacity building on key aspects of child-friendly, gender-sensitive, climate-resilient WinS

Through state and district level workshops, child-cabinets were oriented on the importance of hand hygiene, menstrual hygiene management, and the operation and maintenance of WASH facilities at schools.

UNICEF through its implementation partners, Centre for Environment Education (CEE), Vinyas Society, and Action for Community Empowerment (ACE) focused on enhancing the capacities of government officials, teachers, child cabinets, SMCs, and janitors who are crucial to the success of WinS. By providing training and support, UNICEF and its partners have helped these stakeholders implement and maintain WASH facilities; handholding support was provided to develop model schools with WASH facilities in seven identified desert districts – Sirohi, Barmer and Jaisalmer, and Udaipur, Dungarpur, Rajsamand, and Pali that represented the tribal typology. Factors like social equity, hard-to-reach areas, border areas, and socio-economic parameters were considered while selecting districts for the intervention.

Through state and district level workshops, child-cabinets were oriented on the importance of hand hygiene, MHM, and O&M of WASH facilities at schools. These workshops have been delivered through a child-friendly, gender-sensitive, and climate-resilient perspective. The capacity building activities have also included the development of training material to support the implementation of WinS, along with the revision of the SAP. This has included partnerships with private sector organizations to provide funding and technical support for construction of the facilities.



May 2022: after WinS intervention

## 5.6 COVID-19 response

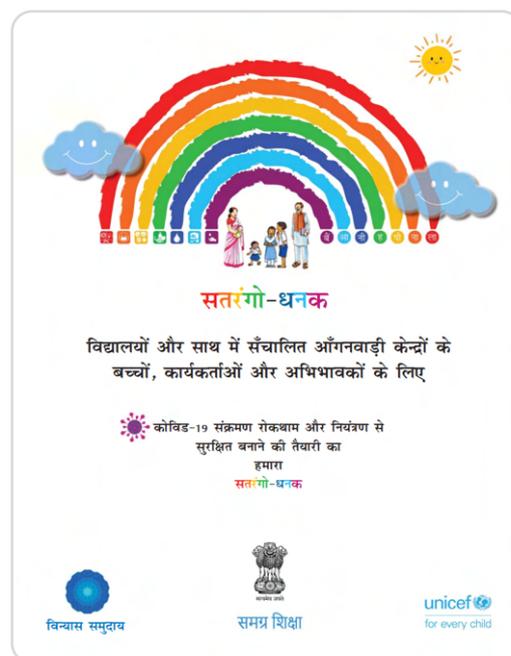
UNICEF had been supporting Global Handwashing Day since 2008. The arrival of COVID-19 accelerated these efforts with a strong case for better hygiene, especially hand washing with soap, practices. In March 2020, the Indian government announced a nation-wide lockdown to contain the spread of the virus. Schools, offices and public gatherings were immediately shut down, and wherever possible, day-to-day interactions, business and classes were moved to remote and online mediums. In September 2020, The Department of School Education and Literacy issued guidelines for the safe reopening of schools. UNICEF provided technical support in Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SmSA), School Education Department for developing the safe school protocol (SSP), creating social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) materials for COVID appropriate behaviours (CAB) in schools and developing a national training toolkit on SSPs to be disseminated using online modules. As per these guidelines, state governments were to prepare standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the phases of school reopening. In April 2021, India witnessed the second and deadlier wave of COVID-19. As a result, schools remained closed for a second academic year in a row. After 18 months of school closure, governments across the country started issuing the school reopening SOPs in the final quarter of 2021.

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## Safe school reopening guidelines

In Rajasthan, the state government issued the guidelines for schools to reopen from September 2021. As per the recommendations of the Ministry of Education (MoE), schools in the state were first reopened for the students of class 9 and 12, and then slowly, with adequate intervals for the remaining classes. As part of the COVID-19 prevention guidelines, the state government allowed 50 per cent capacity of students in the schools, and restrictions were put on morning assembly, sports and the Mid-day Meals (MDM). UNICEF Rajasthan developed a comprehensive school reopening compendium in a participatory manner, through a series of interactions and consultations with key stakeholders including state and district officials, teachers, SMC members and children from a few districts using virtual platforms during the lockdowns.



Guidelines on safe reopening of schools issued by the Department of School Education, Rajasthan, with technical support from UNICEF and VINYAS Society

This compendium includes seven key components:

- The sanitization of physical spaces and basic infrastructure in schools
- Respiratory hygiene
- Essentials for studying and playing within schools
- Food-preparation for MDM
- Water and toilet facilities
- Hand-washing with soap
- Basic behavioral aspects for the prevention of COVID-19 in schools

As part of the COVID-19 response strategy, UNICEF Rajasthan piloted child-friendly and COVID-19 appropriate handwashing units in schools. developed a hand hygiene for all (HH4A) roadmap for Rajasthan, and generated evidence on the gaps in WinS within the context of COVID-19. The pandemic has further highlighted the importance of hand-hygiene and the interrelation of health, hygiene, educational outcomes and aspirations of the children and youth in the world. This programme was guided by the renewed focus on WinS, and built upon the work that was implemented in the state.

In the months that followed, the need for individual, community and facility level hygiene took on urgent, life-saving proportions. The government was supported by health organisations in its efforts to raise awareness and stressed on the need for regular handwashing with soap and water, for cleaning surfaces, wearing masks, and maintaining social distance. These proved particularly challenging for the urban poor, who lacked adequate access to water for handwashing or cleaning purposes, or spaces to isolate in. UNICEF Rajasthan had worked towards the COVID-19 response in urban slums and institutions, and in rural schools.

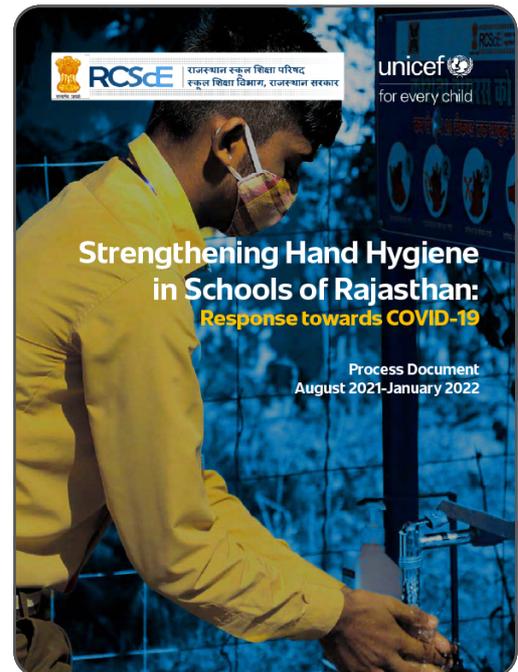


Foot operated, age-appropriate handwashing station

## Rural schools

UNICEF entered into a partnership with ACE and CEE for COVID-19 response by strengthening hand washing with soap services in schools and co-located anganwadi centres from August 2021 to January 2022. Both ACE and CEE had been working in the areas of WASH, community engagement and education. They also had vast experience in developing child-friendly and climate-ready infrastructure and undertaking other development initiatives in different parts of India, including Rajasthan. This partnership was built on the unique capacities of each partner, and their familiarity with the target locations.

ACE built on its prior experience of promoting hand hygiene in the schools of Rajasthan under the School WASH in Tribal Rajasthan (SWASHT-R) project along with its technical skills in developing WASH infrastructure, parallelly, CEE brought its skill in using a community-forward, innovative approach towards building long-term, local capacities of targeted communities, particularly, under its Prajwala project for WASH in the residential schools of Rajasthan. Both partners targeted 700 schools each – ACE targeted schools of Udaipur and Dungarpur, and CEE worked with schools of Barmer and Jaisalmer. With the emergence of COVID-19, hand washing with soap was promoted and hand hygiene for all was prioritised. However, as the COVID-19 restrictions lifted, and vaccination drives were underway, there were some inconsistencies in hygiene and sanitation behaviour.



A process document that details UNICEF's efforts to strengthen hand hygiene in response to COVID-19 in the rural context.



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## Urban schools

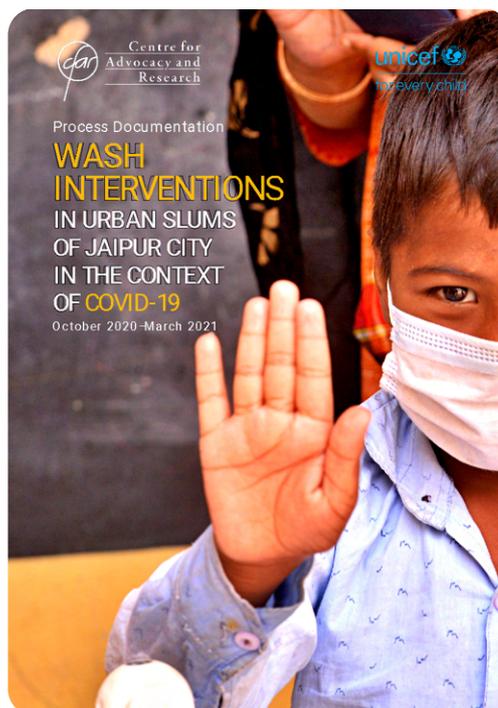
In 2020, UNICEF initiated WASH interventions in the urban slums of Jaipur in partnership with Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR). This was done in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic with a threefold-objective to understand WASH in urban slums in the context of COVID-19, with a focus on WinS, to strengthen child-friendly and gender-inclusive WASH facilities and services in public health and public service institutions, and to compile lessons from the intervention. The spread of COVID-19, and its predominance in urban hotspots, highlighted the need to initiate work in the urban high-density areas, primarily focusing on the vulnerable and poor populations residing in the slums with an encompassing approach that focussed on 'no one left behind'.

The UNICEF-CFAR partnership, thus, designed and piloted an institutions-to-community approach, focussing on institutions that cater to children and women. The two organisations joined forces to identify the most pressing needs with respect to WASH programming in the context of COVID-19, within urban Rajasthan, and to design and document innovative ways to address them. This helped in addressing the evidence gap with respect to WASH in urban slums, and model cost-effective and sustainable ways of meeting the WASH needs of slum dwellers.

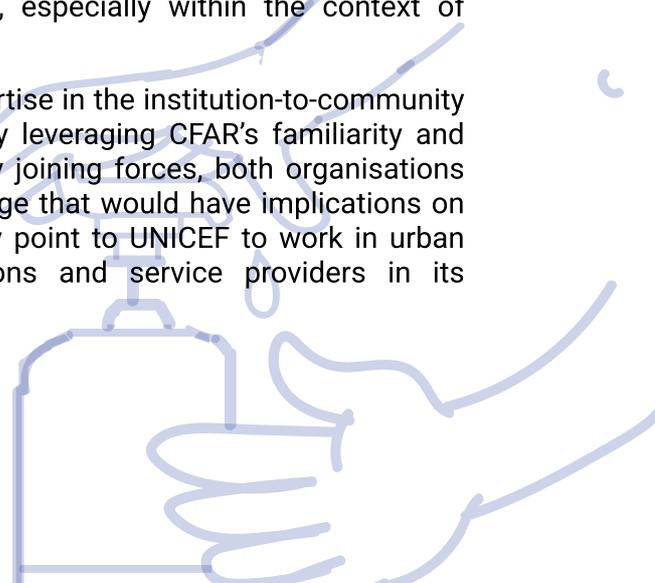
CFAR brought its extensive experience and familiarity with the WASH situation among the urban poor in Jaipur to this partnership, and its expertise in community engagement. UNICEF, on the other hand, has been working with the Government of Rajasthan to provide technical assistance for strengthening WASH policies and guidelines and

advocate for the rights of the most marginalized, particularly children and caregivers of children. UNICEF through its WASH programming has extensive experience with improving WASH in schools, anganwadi centres (AWCs) and health facilities, especially within the context of COVID-19.

UNICEF thus partnered with CFAR to complement their expertise in the institution-to-community approach and its focus on children in its programming, by leveraging CFAR's familiarity and existing rapport with urban poor communities in Jaipur. By joining forces, both organisations gained fresh insight and expanded their reach and knowledge that would have implications on their future programming. The programme offered an entry point to UNICEF to work in urban poor settlements, and to CFAR to work with institutions and service providers in its programming.



Document that captures the WASH interventions in the urban slums of Jaipur city.



# Child-friendly WinS



**“The children's preference for using the toilet units has significantly improved the cleanliness of our premises.**

**Additionally, the provision of age-appropriate handwashing units has led to an increase in handwashing among our students, instilling important hygiene habits.”**



**Pankaj Shah, Principal, PS Rodewala, Dungapur**

## 5.7 Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22

In 2014, as a prelude to the launch of SBM, the Swachh Bharat, Swachh Vidyalaya (SBSV) – Clean India, Clean School – campaign was initiated. This was a landmark programme that treated WinS as a mission and set clear goals, standards, and operating procedures. The initiative included six essential components under WASH – safe drinking water, gender-segregated toilets and hand-washing stations (HWS). Apart from providing for these facilities, it also includes the components of O&M and capacity-building of the teachers and students, behaviour change of students, promoting hygiene practices, and developing students as agents of change to carry these messages and practices into their homes and communities.



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2014 is considered a watershed in terms of the advancement of the WinS agenda both at the national and state levels. Important policy and programmatic shifts took place that resulted in an enabling environment for the advancement of the prescribed agenda in the state. Some of the notable steps included – the Government of Rajasthan in 2014, made a special annual financial provision of INR 5000 per year, per school for O&M. Since 2018, this grant is a part of the annual budget of the state. WASH was integrated into lessons for children from class 3 to 8 as part of environmental studies, health and physical education; sanitation and hygiene in schools has also been integrated into the teachers' training modules.

In 2015, the state government also introduced the school benchmarking system, using a four-star system to rate schools along the following WASH indicators including drinking water facilities, separate toilets for boys and girls, functionality and use of the toilet and hand-washing facilities. Building on this initiative, in 2016-17, the Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar (SVP) was instituted by the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Human Resource Development, to recognize and award schools that have performed exceptionally well in bringing sanitation and hygiene practices to the forefront. This again created a sense of competition and motivated the schools towards developing their schools into a swachh vidyalaya.

The Ministry of Education decided to relaunch the SVP 2021-22, where the participant schools are scored under six categories – water, toilet, hand-washing with soap, O&M, behaviour change, capacity building, and COVID-19 intervention. The participating schools are given a star rating, between one to five stars, under each of these categories, based on their performance. Based on these ratings, the school becomes eligible for the SVP at three levels – district-level (open to schools with three, four and five- star ratings), state-level (open to schools with four and five-star rating) and national-level (open to schools with five-star rating). At the district and state-level, the schools are awarded a certificate of recognition. In Rajasthan, 26 schools were selected and awarded at the state level and nominated at the national level. In 2021-22, 45 schools were awarded at the national level, two schools were selected from Rajasthan.

## Rajasthan's performance in SVP 2021-22

The SVP 2021-22 was launched with the intention of recognising the efforts of schools that performed well in the field of cleanliness and overall WASH services within schools. The initiative was rolled out across all states and is open to government schools, government-aided schools, and private schools. In Rajasthan, out of 107,376 schools (including private schools), 63,856 (59.5%) schools registered on their own for the SVP 2021-22, whereas 46,633 (43.5%) schools completed the process. The star-ratings of the participating schools are listed in the table below:



The efforts of UNICEF Rajasthan paid off and gave the state the support they needed to perform well in the SVP. It is promising to note that in the SVP performance of Rajasthan, only 10 per cent of the schools lie in the one- and two-star category, which means that they lack basic WASH services. The remaining 90 per cent fall within the three-star rating. The district evaluation team assessed 11,487 schools, and 1,254 schools were eligible for awards. Eventually, 218 schools were selected in the overall categories, and 174 in the sub-categories.

UNICEF partnered with organizations like Action for Community Empowerment (ACE), Centre for Environmental Education (CEE), and Vinyas Society for the training of master trainers on WinS. The aim of this support was to ensure that the SAPs were successfully implemented in schools through which WASH services improved within school. Through these partners, teachers and child cabinets were oriented and provided with hand-holding support to ensure that they understood how to implement the SAPs effectively. The partner organizations provided guidance on best practices related to water supply, drinking water, toilets and functionality, handwashing with soap behaviours, O&M, SLWM, and behaviour change.

To achieve this, UNICEF Rajasthan provided orientation on the WinS toolkit to panchayat education extension officers (PEEOs), block, district, and state officials through video-conferences, YouTube videos, and district-level workshops. This orientation aimed to ensure that the officials responsible for overseeing the implementation of the SAPs were familiar with the best practices and strategies for improving WinS. This approach helped to ensure that the SAP was implemented effectively, and that the schools had access to the necessary support and resources to improve their WASH facilities and practices.



बेटी बचाओ बचाव

# Climate-friendly Wins

"We have successfully mitigated the issue of sand infiltration, reducing blockages and ensuring smooth functioning by the strategic reorientation of the toilets, coupled with the use of desert-growing plants as barriers, which has effectively prevented sand from entering the facilities."



Gamar Singh Bhati, SMC member in Khariya Kalan village, Barmer

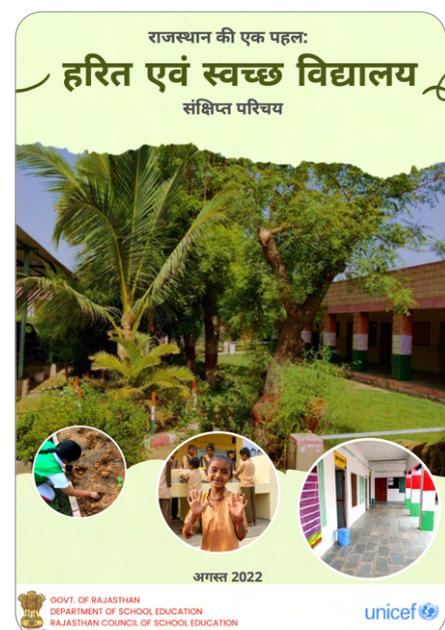
## 5.8 Clean and Green Schools Initiative

The Rajasthan Council for School Education (RCScE) has initiated climate action across all primary, upper primary and select senior secondary schools. Through this initiative climate change education will be included in schools and in the curriculum in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 4 and 13, and the New Education Policy (NEP) 2020 vision of inclusive and universal education. Children in primary grade schools are at a budding stage of cognitive and creative ability, therefore, environmental sensitivity should be imparted by creating a cognitive learning environment with the lens of climate action. Students engaged in grades 9 to 12 are at a habit-forming stage with higher interest in outdoor activities and lessons, learnings at this stage are taken back to the community.

The RCScE with technical support from UNICEF introduced the Clean and Green School initiative for 1,000 senior secondary schools in Rajasthan. The objective was to create a conducive learning environment and opportunities for a blended approach of learning by getting children engaged in environmental activities linked to the curriculum framework, outside the classroom, which in turn will contribute to the cognitive development of children. Sustainable 'Clean and Green Schools' will be guided by the principles of environmental sustainability with interventions designed and implemented through a collective effort of students, teachers and community. The programme was scaled up by the education department for the academic year of 2022-23, with a reissue of guidelines with technical support from UNICEF for 2,000 senior secondary schools, which do not include the previous 1,000 schools.

In addition to the scale up for the next academic year, RCScE with technical support from UNICEF, introduced the 'Holistic Development of Children and Strengthening Local Knowledge for Environment Sustainability' programme for all primary and upper primary schools. The programme focuses on the holistic development of children with an improved sense of responsibility and belonging to the environment, led through informed mentorship and knowledge sharing by the teachers.

The Clean and Green School initiative and the Holistic Development for Environment Development programme have set a working base for climate change and environment sustainability (CCES) across the departments at the state-level, district-level and block-level. There is now a need to ensure that implementation is sustained, combined with advocacy to take the initiatives across all government schools and scaling up in the long run.



# 6. Results Achieved: 2018 to 2022

## Development of 3 guidelines:



Guidelines for Clean and Green Schools



Holistic Development of Children and Strengthening Local Knowledge for Environmental Sustainability



Guidelines for Safe School Reopening Guidelines

## Funds



Government allocated INR 400 million covering more than 50,000 rural primary and upper primary and 3,000 secondary schools of Rajasthan for enhancing WASH and environmental aspects in schools.

## UNICEF used the WinS toolkit for the capacity building of :



194,358  
Teachers



50  
Janitors in  
Intervention Schools



10,150  
Child Cabinet Members



4,350  
SMC Members



5,417 Boys



4,733 Girls

## UNICEF support to enhance WinS infrastructure, hygiene behaviour, strengthen O&M



**200+**  
Engineers



**1,312**  
Senior Government Officials



**14,446**  
Master Trainers

### Global Handwashing Day 2020:

The Chief Minister of Rajasthan led Global Handwashing Day.

**10 Million**  
People Reached

**700**  
COVID-appropriate  
Hand Washing Units

### School Education Department has provided more than:

**2000**  
incinerators in girls' toilets

### Swachh Vidyalaya Puraskar 2021-22:

**43%**  
Schools participated

**2**  
Schools won at national level

### Adequacy of WASH facilities was observed in Rajasthan



**52%**  
Schools have adequate  
functional tap connections

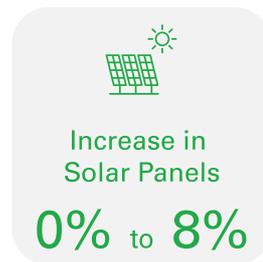
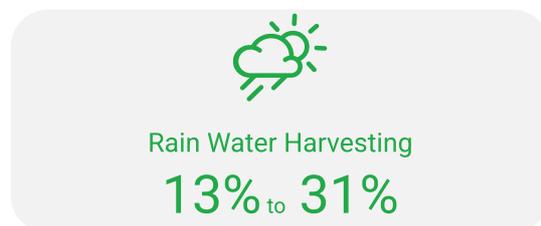
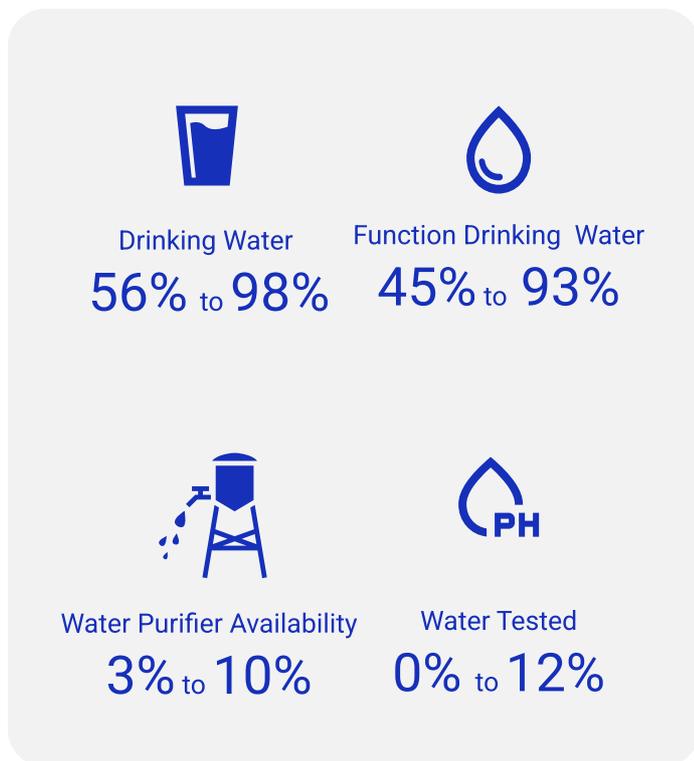


**48%**  
Schools have adequate  
functional girls' toilets

## Progress Achieved: 2018 to 2022

The following data shows the progress in WASH facilities over the last programme cycle i.e. 2017-18 to 2021-22, that has been retrieved from UDISE+. There has been a significant increase in drinking water, and handwashing with soap, kitchen gardening, and water harvesting. There is a decrease in functional toilet facilities which could be due to the COVID-19 lockdown. Water purification, water testing, and other WASH gaps will be bridged by strengthening operation and maintenance to improve WASH functionality.

-  Climate Change & Environmental Sustainability
-  Water
-  Sanitation
-  Hand Wash
-  Menstrual Hygiene



## 7. Geographical Context

Much like the geographical variations of the state, Rajasthan exhibits distinct socio-cultural features across the 33 districts that have been grouped into seven administrative divisions (since 2023 Rajasthan has 50 districts and 10 administrative divisions) and nine cultural regions, each with its distinct historical and cultural heritage. Based on their experience, the stakeholders realised that what works in one district doesn't necessarily work in another. Every place is unique and requires a new approach that fits in with the local context. This is where the geographical context of Rajasthan is a critical aspect to understand and consider in any programmatic intervention that is implemented in the state. On the one hand are the vast spread of the desert region, the hostile weather, and the sparsely populated villages and *dhanis* or hamlets inhabited by nomadic, pastoral communities. The different communities speak different dialects and are bound by strict social and gender norms. The region also suffers from inconsistent phone and internet connectivity that poses its own set of challenges.

Similarly, in the vast hilly terrain with scattered tribal habitations, outreach is a pressing challenge. Tribal populations also generally have lower access to resources such as land and water, and large sections of these families depend on wage labour. The team discovered that evoking conventional notions of sentiments of shame and pride are not an effective strategy among these communities. Seasonal water scarcity is high in many pockets. Access to water sources is more challenging for tribal families who tend to settle in peripheral hilly terrain. The reach of mass media is low in remote tribal areas.

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## 8. Way Forward

In 2020, the unprecedented spread of COVID-19 accelerated the importance of WASH and affected behaviour change among the government and academia, and with children and communities. The momentum achieved needs to be sustained through consistent efforts to make positive hygiene practices like handwashing with soap the norm. The pandemic has shown that investing in public health and the healthcare system is critical to mitigating the impact of such events. By working hand-in-hand with the Department of Education (DoE) and the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), UNICEF will achieve synergy and convergence in promoting child-friendly, gender-responsive, and climate-resilient WASH services in schools and pre-schools. Some of the emerging lessons and recommendations for the WinS initiative in 2023-2027 are:

### **1. New Educational Policy and shift towards AWCs for inclusive WASH facilities**

The Government of India brought forth the New Education Policy in 2020, which has ushered in greater convergence between the DoE and DWCD, and has expanded the age group for education to cover children from 3 to 18 years. About 33 per cent of AWCs have already been co-located within school premises, and in 2022, Rajasthan became the only state to create guidelines for operationalizing WASH in AWCs. This provided a secure learning environment for children and underscored the necessity for early intervention and education on proper hygiene practices. Including children in the preschool age group in the education system instils a culture of cleanliness and hygiene from a young age and is expected to have benefits and far-reaching effects on the health and welfare of children and their communities.

### **2. Hand Hygiene for All**

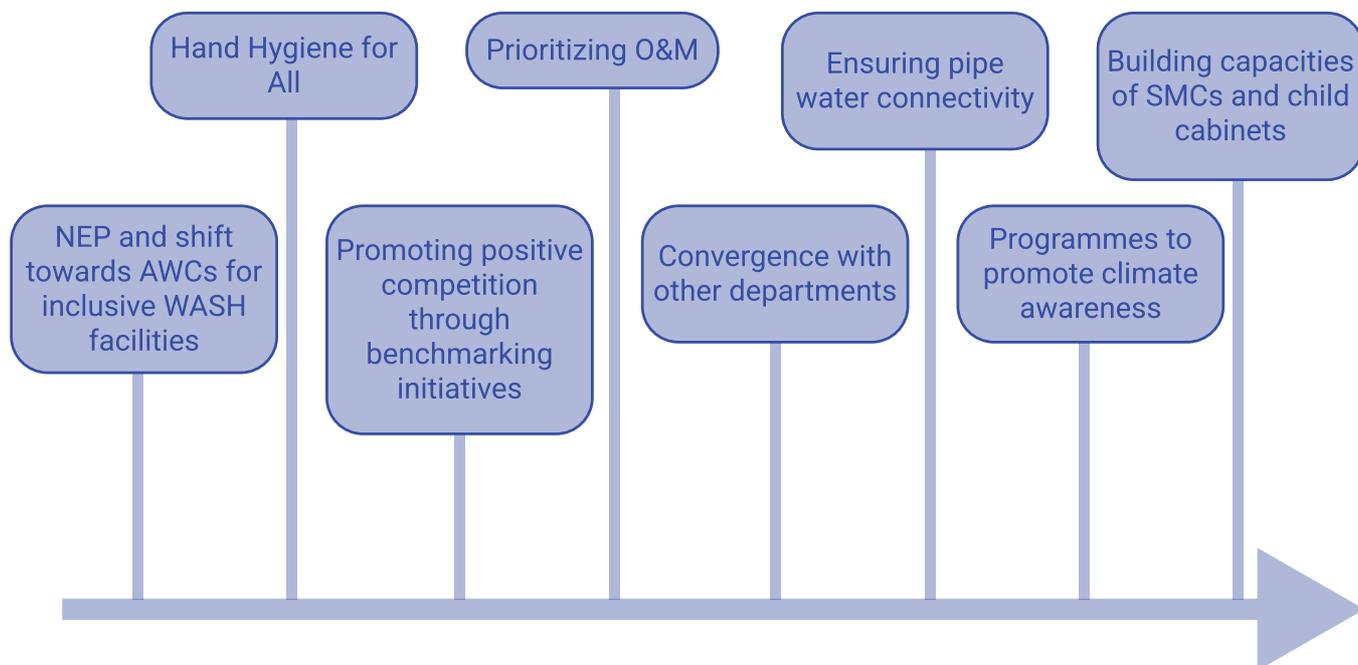
An important endeavour is the execution of Hand Hygiene for All (HH4A) in Rajasthan, which entails a system-enhancement strategy to guarantee access to hand hygiene even in remote areas. This involves cooperation among various sectors, including government entities, CSOs, school administration committees, parents, educators, students, and community members. UNICEF intends to collaborate closely with the DoE and the DWCD to foster hand hygiene practices among children and caregivers. This will help to make hand hygiene a social norm and can prevent communicable diseases like COVID-19.

### **3. Promoting positive competition through benchmarking initiatives**

The benchmarking of schools and the effective rollout of the national SVP or clean school award across all schools in Rajasthan was a key intervention. Prioritizing and budgeting for O&M is also crucial to ensure the sustainability of sanitation infrastructure and hygiene behaviour in schools. This can be done by utilizing the school's composite grants for water and sanitation and addressing gaps through other sources of funds at the local level.

### **3. Prioritizing O&M**

It is imperative to advocate for the prioritisation and allocation of a budget for O&M to ensure the sustainability of sanitation infrastructure and hygiene practices in schools. This can be accomplished by effectively utilising the school's composite grants for water and sanitation, as well as addressing gaps through other sources of funding at the local level. This will help to promote the effective and efficient management of WASH services in schools, ultimately leading to better health outcomes for students and the broader community. UNICEF will work with local stakeholders to advocate for increased investment in O&M for sustainable WASH infrastructure and behaviour in schools.



## 5. Convergence with other departments

In Rajasthan, there has been significant progress in improving school sanitation by ensuring the availability of functional toilets. However, the maintenance and upkeep of these toilets remain a challenge, mainly due to the absence of janitorial staff or the high costs associated with cleanliness. To address this issue, UNICEF will work closely with the relevant stakeholders and advocate for the reduction of costs through cross-subsidisation by fostering inter-departmental convergence, primarily led by the panchayati raj department, to maintain cleanliness in public institutions including schools, community sanitary complexes, AWCs, and healthcare facilities, among others.

## 6. Ensuring pipe water connectivity

Enhancing piped water connectivity in schools is another important initiative, as only 79 per cent of government schools have running water tap connections as of March 2023. Regular water supply will ensure people can practice handwashing with soap at critical times. The Prime Minister's 100 days campaign under JJM provides an opportunity for this.

## 7. Programmes to promote climate awareness

Rajasthan government with support from UNICEF launched Clean and Green Schools and the Holistic Development of Children and Strengthening Local Knowledge for Environmental Sustainability programmes, which offer a unique chance to integrate water conservation and greywater management practices in schools and to foster an eco-sensitive mindset among children and help develop WASH services in schools.

## 8. Building capacities of SMCs and child cabinets

Platforms like SMCs, child cabinets, and eco clubs have become dysfunctional due to prolonged school closures during COVID-19. These bodies need to be strengthened through capacity building and oriented on their roles and responsibilities to WinS.

# Do you know how to wash your hands?



Wet hands with water



Apply soap



Lather well



Scrub palm to palm



Scrub between fingers



Scrub back of hands



Scrub base of thumb



Scrub under fingernails



Scrub back of fingers



Rinse hands with running water



Dry hands



Clean hands!



