



## ***Star Approach -A step Towards Hygiene Friendly Schools***

## ***Star Approach Introduction***

The Three Star Approach for WASH in Schools is designed to improve the effectiveness of hygiene behaviour change programmes. The approach ensures that healthy habits are taught, practised and integrated into daily school routines. The Three Star Approach helps schools meet the essential criteria for a healthy and protective learning environment for children as part of the broader child-friendly schools initiative. It aims to address the bottlenecks that block the effectiveness and expansion of current WASH in Schools programmes.

In the Three Star Approach, schools are encouraged to take simple, inexpensive steps outlined in this Field Guide. These steps are designed to ensure that all students wash their hands with soap, have access to drinking water, and are provided with clean, gender-segregated toilets at school every day. Group activities drive this incremental approach, beginning with daily, supervised group hand-washing sessions. Once minimum standards are achieved, schools can move from one to three stars by expanding hygiene promotion activities and improving infrastructure, especially for girls, and will ultimately achieve the national standards for WASH in Schools.

The Three Star Approach involves changing the way WASH in Schools programming is perceived by schools, communities, and decision makers in government and support agencies like Khwahish Sewa Society (KHASS). By prioritizing the most essential actions for achieving goals, the Three Star Approach helps schools focus on meeting children's needs through key interventions. At the same time, it provides a clear pathway for all schools throughout a country to meet national standards, and for all children to have hygiene-promoting and healthy schools. It encourages local action and support from communities and does not depend on expensive hardware inputs from the education system or external support agencies. 'Keep it simple, scalable and sustainable' is the guiding concept for interventions at all stages, so that the approach can be sustainably expanded districtwide at low cost.

By focusing on the most essential actions for achieving goals, the Three Star Approach will help schools become more effective at providing a healthy environment for all children and promoting positive hygiene behaviour.

## ***WASH in Schools to health and educational performance***

Every child has the right to adequate water and sanitation, including in school. This is reason enough to prioritize, fund and improve WASH in Schools programmes everywhere. The case is made even stronger by the growing body of evidence linking water, sanitation and hygiene education in schools to children's health and educational achievement.

## ***WASH in Schools leads to healthier children***

Children spend a large portion of their day at school. They are less likely to get sick from diarrhoea and other hygiene-related diseases if their school has an effective hand-washing programme, adequate sanitation and safe drinking water. Their families are also less likely to get sick when children are healthy: Studies show that diseases contracted at school can lead to infections in up to half of household members. The most important way schools can have an impact on health is by promoting children's good hygiene behaviour through hygiene education and by making hand washing with soap a daily part of the school routine. When children become accustomed to these healthy habits at school, the behaviour is ingrained and can last a

lifetime. Children can also act as agents of change, influencing their siblings and parents to change their own hygiene practices, and even serving facilities in their communities.

## ***WASH in Schools leads to better educational performance, especially for girls***

In many developing countries, the degree of a child's exposure to hygiene-related diseases is a key determinant of her or his chances of success in school and in later life. School-aged children affected by hygiene-related diseases are much more likely to experience extended absences from school. The World Health Organization estimates that 272 million school days are lost annually due to diarrhoea alone. Studies also show that hand washing with soap in primary schools can reduce absenteeism rates by between 20 per cent and 54 per cent (Source UNICEF). Drinking water at school is also important: Studies show that children who do not drink enough water at school can become dehydrated, which affects their cognitive abilities. Girls miss the most school because they usually shoulder the greatest burden for household chores, such as hauling water or taking care of younger children who are sick, often with diarrhoea or other WASH-related diseases. Adolescent girls frequently stay home during menstruation due to social and cultural beliefs and practices, a lack of sanitary pads, or because there are no gender-segregated toilets or private washing facilities at school. In some areas, poorly planned and located sanitation facilities may contribute to high levels of sexual abuse and violence in schools.

## ***No Star Schools:***

The existing situation for many schools:

- Limited or no hygiene promotion i.e. soap and water is not available for hand washing at suitable place and facilities for handwashing at right moments i.e. before midday meal and after the use of toilet.
- May or may not have WASH infrastructure i.e. no toilets, non-availability of soap and no provision for safe, cool drinking water for children and no regular education towards promotion of hygiene in school environment.

## ***★ One Star School***

Daily routines to promote healthy habits

- Daily supervised group hand washing with soap especially liquid soap, normally before the midday meal.
- Daily supervised cleaning of toilets, and provision of soap and water.
- At least one functional toilet for girls and one for boys; no open defecation.
- Daily supervised use of drinking-water bottles by all children (In case there is no provision of safe drinking water) i.e. no water purifier in school premises.

How these milestones are achieved may vary from school to school, depending on existing facilities and the exact method taken for implementing the approach. In all cases, the key to becoming a One Star School – and the essence of the Three Star Approach – is the institution of daily supervised group activities for hygiene, sanitation and drinking water. By taking part in these daily activities, children become true participants in the process while developing positive lifelong habits. By hosting these activities, schools can significantly improve the learning environment without relying on resources from outside the community.



## One Star Schools

Daily routines to promote healthy habits

### Interventions

#### Daily supervised group hand washing with soap, ideally before the school meal

- Hand washing with soap becomes a habit.
- The need to wash hands with soap before eating is reinforced.
- Children like the daily activity and learn proper hand-washing techniques.
- Group hand-washing sessions provide a set time to deliver hygiene messages.

#### Daily supervised cleaning and provisioning (with soap and water) of toilets

- Toilets are used because they are clean.
- Water and soap are available in toilets.
- Open defecation in and near the school is eliminated.
- Children learn the importance of sanitation through active participation. H
- All children have drinking water whether or not a safe source is available at school.
- Bottles are not required if there is water purifier in the school still students are encouraged to bring their own water bottles to avoid drinking water with cupped hands to prevent wastage of water.
- Cleaning of water storage tank once a month



### Hand Hygiene

Group hand-washing with soap sessions are conducted once a day and are supervised by teachers, who emphasize good hand-washing techniques. Older students or school WASH club members could also help run the activity. If potable water sources are not available, any nearby source can be used because water for hand washing does not need to meet the same standards as water for drinking. The daily hand-washing sessions can be carried out during any suitable break in the school day, but the best time is just before lunch or snack time to help reinforce the importance of washing hands with soap before eating or morning assembly could be the other option. The hand-washing sessions are used as an opportunity for delivering hygiene

messages, especially the message that hands should be washed at two critical times: before eating and after using the toilet.

## ***Sanitation***

The sanitation component of a One Star School also centres on daily activities, in this case, daily toilet cleaning by students, supervised by their teachers. This activity ensures that toilets are kept clean, while involving students in the process. All but the youngest students take part in toilet cleaning, with fairness and gender equality built into the cleaning rosters. Schools should also ensure that toilet cleaning is never used as a punishment.

Toilet surroundings are also kept clean, a practice that discourages open defecation and is supported with messages on eliminating open defecation delivered during the daily handwashing sessions. During the daily cleaning, toilets will also be provided with soap for handwashing and with water, in cases where water must be carried by hand. Repairs, upgrades and (sometimes) new construction will need to be carried out in schools without functioning toilets. In all cases, the focus will be on the use of local resources with the goal of having at least one functioning toilet for girls and one for boys in each school. Once this is achieved, the focus will be on maintaining and cleaning the existing toilets rather than building new toilets. This emphasis on toilet cleanliness is supported by experience and evidence showing that even when many toilets exist, children tend to use only the clean ones. In schools that have a sweeper, children can still be involved by taking on some of the cleaning tasks, under supervision of teachers.



## ***Drinking water***

A safe source of drinking water at school is not a requirement for a school to attain One Star status. Instead, students can bring their own water bottles or containers to school each day, filled with the drinking water used at home. Parents will be informed that children should carry water to school, and teachers will supervise this activity during assembly. Bottles or containers may also be used in schools that have safe water sources as a way to reduce congestion at water sources and to ensure that children always have drinking water at hand.

In some cases, schools may decide to provide water bottles or containers for students, but this will generally not be necessary because water bottles are common and inexpensive in many regions of the world. At the One Star stage, if access to safe drinking water at home is a major problem in the school catchment area, some schools may choose to install and use simple water treatment systems, filters or water boilers.

## **Two Star School**

In a Two Star School, all of the One Star daily group activities will continue to be emphasized. In addition, greater focus will be placed on hand washing after using the toilet, improved toilet facilities and menstrual hygiene management, and safe drinking water. The Two Star School will take steps to meet three new incremental milestones for hygiene, sanitation and water:

### **Hygiene**

- Sufficient group handwashing facilities allowing groups of 10-12 students to wash hands at the same time.
- The handwashing station should be simple, scalable and sustainable, relying on usage of minimum water. These handwashing facilities can be developed using local materials.
- Daily supervised group hand washing with soap especially liquid soap, normally before the midday meal.
- Children wash their hands with soap after using the toilet.

### **Middle/High and Senior Secondary Schools**

- Improved sanitation and menstrual hygiene management facilities including soap, adequate and private space for changing, adequate water for cloth washing and disposal facilities for menstrual waste, including an incinerator and dust bins.
- Availability of sanitary pads through MHM club or dispenser installed in the toilet area.

### **Sanitation**

- Daily supervised cleaning of toilets, and provision of soap and water.
- At least one functional toilet for girls and one for boys; no open defecation.
- Separate toilets for boys and girls, with one unit generally having one toilet (WC) plus 3 urinals. The ratio to be maintained is preferably one unit for every 40 students.  
(WC: water closets contain only the flush toilet and possibly a sink or basin) National standards
- If there is no national standard, the international standard of one toilet for 25 girls, one toilet and one urinal for 50 boys, and two toilets for teachers will be applied.

### **Safe drinking Water**

- Daily supervised use of drinking-water bottles by all children to avoid water wastages using cupped hands.
- Safe, cool drinking water is available at school through water cooler and water purifier installed.

### **Education/Behaviour change:**

- Water, sanitation and hygiene behaviour change communication activities should be part of the daily routine of all children.
- Hygiene messages may be integrated into the textbook curriculum or may be imparted through supplementary reading materials, activity based learning methodologies or even during the morning assembly sessions.
- Formal seminar on handwashing and menstrual through outside agency like Khwahish Sewa Society (KHASS)



## Two Star Schools

### Incremental Improvements

#### Interventions

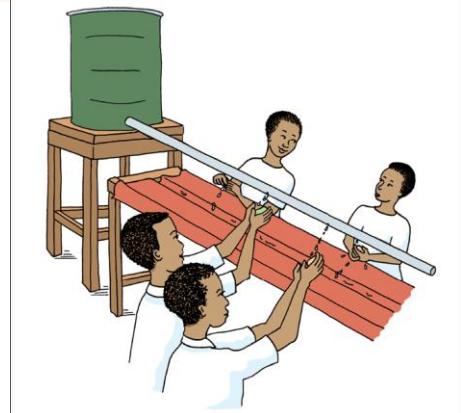
**Hygiene education expanded to stress hand washing after toilet use; hand-washing stations installed as needed; menstrual hygiene education delivered in schools**

**Additional and/or improved toilets, plus facilities for menstrual hygiene management, constructed where needed**

**Low-cost point-of-use water treatment introduced in schools**

#### Results

- Children learn to wash their hands with soap at both critical times: before meals (during daily group hand-washing sessions) and after defecation.
- Hand-washing stations are demonstrated to the community.
- Girls gain knowledge and support on menstrual hygiene management.
- Additional toilets are available at school for boys and girls
- Girls are further encouraged to attend classes because there are additional private sanitation and/or menstrual hygiene management facilities.
- Children have access to safe drinking water at school.
- Low-cost water treatment is demonstrated to the community.



**Handwashing Station**



**Students' cabinet monitoring group handwashing before MDM**



#### ***WASH Club/Parliament a stepping stone for Star Approach:***

Students' involvement is also very important. WASH-related school clubs already exist, including hygiene, health or environmental clubs. These clubs, or new ones, can become a central part of school efforts to achieve One Star status. Club members can help teachers supervise group hand washing and toilet cleaning; be involved in hygiene education for younger students; and participate in forming links between the school and the community.

(Please read WASH club/parliament roles and responsibilities booklet of KHASS).

## **Three Star School**

Three Star Schools will meet national standards for WASH in Schools, which are important for ensuring that the needs of all children are met and that any national inequities of access to WASH in Schools are progressively eliminated. Standards contain national norms for WASH facilities, including requirements for design, the number of facilities by school size and accessibility for children with disabilities. Standards can also institutionalize hygiene education in schools, and they address issues related to the responsibility for maintenance and repair of facilities. Many schools and communities will need support from the education system to upgrade facilities and systems to meet national standards. Some schools will also require support from external partners. In countries without comprehensive national standards, the global guidelines established by UNICEF and the World Health Organization in 'Water Sanitation and Hygiene Standards for Schools in Low-Cost Settings' can be used as a reference for defining the criteria for Three Star Schools. However, this should only be an interim solution: All countries should develop national standards, and external support programmes can assist in this process.

<b>Three Star Schools</b> Meeting national standards	
	<b>Interventions</b>
<b>School facilities and systems upgraded to meet national standards</b>	<b>Results</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Social norms on good hygiene behaviour are institutionalized.</li><li>• The school is able to offer full accessibility to WASH for all students, including children with disabilities.</li><li>• National inequities are eliminated by ensuring all schools in the country have the same standards for WASH in Schools.</li></ul>

### **National Standards**

In a Three Star School, all of the One Star and Two Star activities will continue to be emphasized. In addition, Operation and Maintenance: Daily, Weekly, Fortnightly, Monthly, Seasonal and Yearly Maintenance will be included.

### **School Maintenance Schedule**

Some members of the SMC, WASH club volunteers as well as school teachers will have to take responsibility for maintaining the school Operation and Maintenance (O&M) schedule. A schedule of periodic visits will have to be planned for the Khwahish Sewa Society volunteer to check if the maintenance schedule is being followed in right earnest. For this purpose, will designate a supervisor (at the suitable level) to visit Schools and make adequate observations for appropriate follow-up actions. A general checklist of maintenance schedule is as follows:

### **Daily maintenance**

- General cleaning of indoor floors of the entire school complex including toilet and kitchen.
- Cleaning of any water-logging in the entire school premises.
- Dusting of general storage, desks and benches and toy/book storage for children.

### **Weekly maintenance**

- Check for all leaky taps, valves, flushing cisterns etc.
- Check for any blockage in the drains, sewage pipes and waste water pipes
- Check for loose locks and shutters of all the doors, windows and almirah etc.
- Loosening of fine sand with a shovel wherever required

### **Fortnightly maintenance**

- Cleaning of dust from all appliances and walls etc.
- Remove dumped rubble/debris/building waste from the premises.
- Observe any water logging in open areas.
- Check for clogged drains on the ground, courtyard, and water outlets from courtyards.
- Remove stains and marks on the enamel painted portions of the walls (especially corners and edges) door, window, almirah shutters with damp cloth/mill detergent dampened cloth.

### **Monthly maintenance**

- Check for any damp marks on the walls, ceilings, and floor.
- Check for any termites in the building.
- Check for proper hardware operation of all doors, windows and almirahs.
- Check for any cracks on walls and roofs.
- Check if main water storage tank cover and outlets are leaking and the stored water is clean.
- Check if all the manhole covers/inspection chamber covers are properly in place and not damaged.
- Check if the First Aid kit is up-to-date and the medicines are within their expiry date. Replenish as per need.

### **Seasonal/quarterly maintenance (before monsoon)**

- Check the water tank thoroughly for leakage etc. Seal it with water proof cement or sealant and clean it at regular intervals.
- In case of an underground tank, check if the cover and the brim of the tank is intact and sufficiently raised from the surrounding ground level.
- Thorough cleaning of the roof, water outlets, checking for cracks, broken gola, coping, chhajja etc. Checking and repairing of leaky roofs Levelling and cleaning of open school ground.
- Thorough checking of electrical lines and earthing (if applicable).
- Clean all dust from the fans, tube lights and bulbs.
- Clean coolers (if any), water tank, change pads, check all electrical systems and earthing.
- Thorough cleaning of water storage tanks as described above.
- Check the functioning of hinges, bolts and other hardware of all doors and windows.

### **Annual maintenance**

- General repair and maintenance work during the vacation.
- Structural repair and plaster work.
- Associated painting work.

- Thorough cleaning of sewage and waste water lines.
- Thorough cleaning of inspection and junction chambers. Repair of leaks, if any.
- Thorough cleaning of septic tanks and leach pits, if being used on any site.
- Major repair of any electrical lines and earthing.
- Repair of blackboards.

Maintenance works for school infrastructure under SSA are to be undertaken through SMC/community of parents, children, teachers and others. SMC may thoroughly inspect the school infrastructure, assess the quantum of repair for each and every components such as school building, toilets drinking water facilities, storage tank, hand pump, ramps railing, child friendly elements etc., and with the help of local masonry carpenter and other skilled worker, assess the tentative cost after verifying the value in the local market. The SMC may also assess the resources available from SSA, through convergence such as from education department through MP and MLA funds and any other scheme such as MNREGA and pool all such financial resource. As ownership lies with the community the annual maintenance is carried out effectively to sustain the school infrastructure as long as possible. Shortage of funds, if any, should be contributed through community contribution. It may be understood that the member of school infrastructure is ultimately to be sustained by SMC/local community.

### ***Options for monitoring and certification***

#### **Monitoring:**

After establishing specific criteria for One, Two and Three Star Schools, based on the recommendations in this Field Guide, school management will develop a monitoring and certification process that includes checklists and other tools.

#### **Certification Process:**

1. Khwahish Sewa Society (KHASS) volunteer or designate will visit school to assess the available infrastructure and recommend the necessary changes or upgrades required to meet the level of certification, school will be given one month time to remove the deficiencies noticed during the visit.
2. School head will inform the Khwahish Sewa Society (KHASS) to visit the school for final review of the improvements. This visit shall be a random visit without informing the school staff.
3. Result of the final visit will be announced within seven working days in writing.
4. No visit during school exams will be conducted.

## **Recognizing and rewarding achievements**

The Three Star certification process offers plenty of opportunities to recognize achievement create visibility for all stakeholders and provide incentives for further improvement. Certification ceremonies can take place on Global Handwashing Day for maximum visibility, and school names can be published in the media.

### **Schools that reach One Star status (Total reward ₹ 2500.00)**

1. Certificate of achievement and memento, medals and certificates for WASH club members (₹ 600.00),
2. Cleaning supplies kit includes brooms, liquid soap, gloves, disinfectant, bucket worth (₹ 900.00)
3. Access to special support for further improvements (₹ 1000.00) on co pay basis.

### **Schools that reach Two Star status (Total reward ₹ 4000.00)**

1. Certificate of achievement and memento, medals and certificates for WASH club and MHM club members (₹ 900.00),
2. Cleaning supplies kit includes brooms, liquid soap, gloves, disinfectant, spin bucket, safety jackets worth (₹ 1600.00)
3. Access to special support for further improvements (₹ 1500.00) on co pay basis.

### **Schools that reach Two Star status (Total reward ₹ 5000.00)**

1. Certificate of achievement and memento, medals and certificates for WASH club and MHM club members (₹ 900.00),
2. Cleaning supplies kit includes brooms, liquid soap, gloves, disinfectant, spin bucket, safety jackets worth (₹ 1600.00)
3. Access to special support for further improvements (₹ 2500.00) on co pay basis.

### ***References:***

- UNICEF field guide three star approach and Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya
- Swachh Bharat Swachh Vidyalaya Government of India Ministry of Human Resource Development A National Mission.