

# RESULT BRIEF

A Joint Initiative by Government of Gujarat and UNICEF India

February 2022



Foot-operated Handwashing Station in use by students at Gyandee High school.



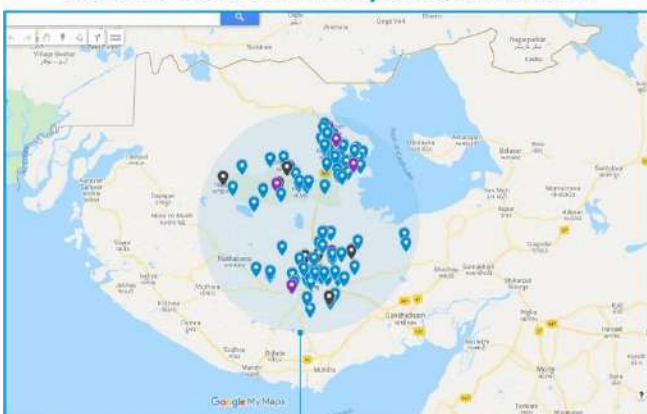
Reading IEC poster by student at Sumarasar shekh kanya primary school.

## SAFE SCHOOL REOPENING IN KUTCH DISTRICT OF GUJARAT

### Why does Safe School Reopening in Kutch District of Gujarat Matter?

The COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected children's learning outcomes, especially in remote and low-income localities. Online Education gives the thrust but faces challenges of poor digital literacy and access to technology. As the state government of Gujarat was trying to reopen schools, many parents and caregivers are worried about their children's safety and security. Therefore, there was a need to complement government efforts by designing safe and secure school reopening programs in Gujarat.

List of Schools Location in Bhuj Taluka, Kutch District



117 Schools, Bhuj Block, Kutch, Gujarat

### What was the Rationale Behind the Project Intervention?

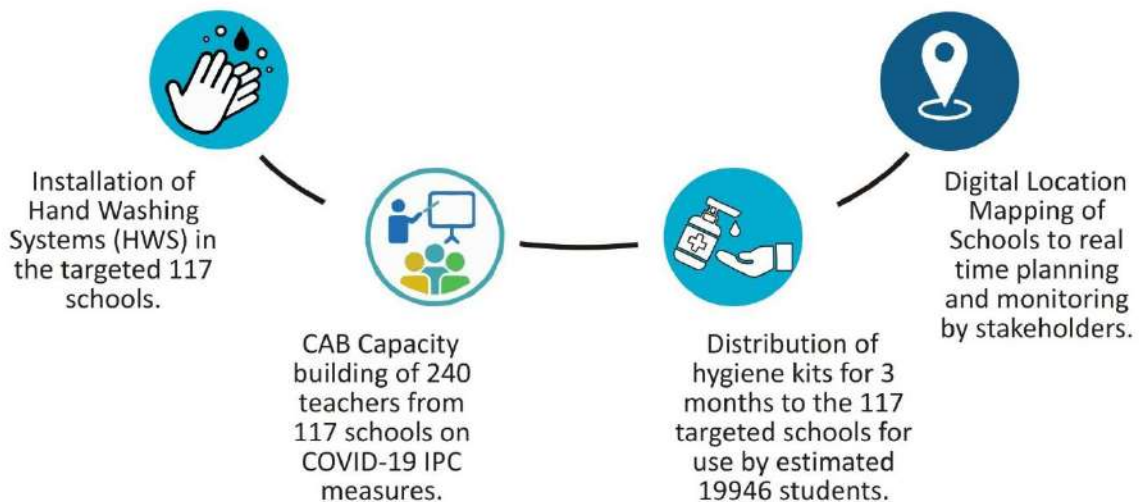
Prolonged school closures continue to compromise the future of millions of children due to a lack of access to continued education and health, nutrition, and WASH services. Hand and respiratory hygiene, including COVID Appropriate Behaviours (CAB), are the most affordable and effective IPC (Infection Prevention and Control) measures. Hence, they are required to be introduced, promoted and ingrained in the day-to-day lives of school students and staff for safe school reopening.

### What were the Criteria for Selecting Schools?

Total 117 high-risk schools from the Kutch district were selected, based on the outcomes of the WASH-COVID Risk Assessment exercise conducted by Government of Gujarat and UNICEF using indicators such as (a) COVID-19 outbreak, (b) poor WASH compliance, (c) high enrolment in schools, and (d) the lower share of teachers and staff receiving WASH and COVID training.

## Preparedness Innovations

This project aims to pilot major preparedness and safety innovations such as:



## What did the Project Set out to Achieve?

The project was jointly designed with Government of Gujarat to achieve the following four objectives.

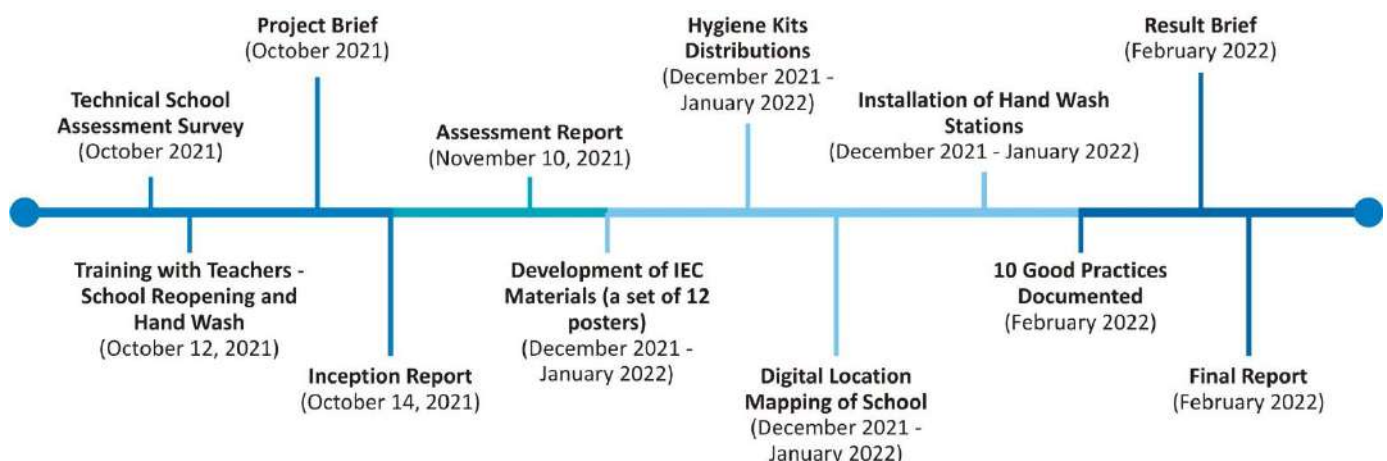
- 1 Draft, review, and produce Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials on WASH-COVID compliance and COVID Appropriate Behaviours (CAB) for display at the school level with teachers and management.
- 2 Strengthen schools' capacities by training, orientation, and dissemination of knowledge product and converge efforts with key District-level departments such as education, health, WASH, Sanitation, and protection sectors on demand basis.
- 3 Jointly assess the requirement for foot-operated COVID-19 compliant handwashing stations and hygiene practices to design,

manufacture, and install a COVID-compliant handwashing system with an adequate supply of hygiene materials.

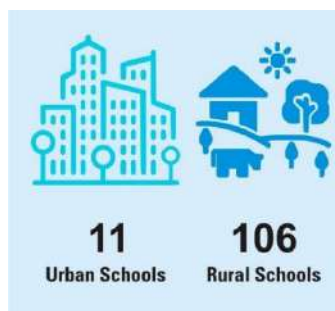
- 4 Collectively capture critical learnings from the project in the form of good practices, project brief, and results brief for co-creation of knowledge and sharing.

## What did the Project Achieve?

- **Collaborative Work:** The project began with establishing collaborative work plan with District Education Office (DEO), District Primary Education Officer (DPEO), Block Resource Centre (BRC), and Cluster Resource Centres (CRC) in Kutch.
- Next, a block-wide training programme covering 117 schools was jointly conducted to impact key messages on COVID preparedness at the school level. The training co-created IEC products and design and features of foot-operated handwashing stations.

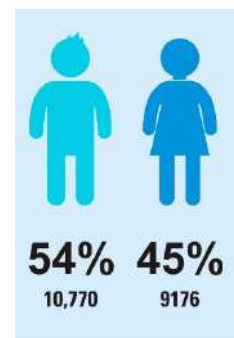


- Following the training, the project team visited each school (117), and a technical assessment was conducted with school teachers and staff to determine the feasibility of installing COVID-compliant foot-operated handwashing stations.
- Based on the findings of technical assessment, demo foot-operated handwashing stations were designed and manufactured—these were first installed and piloted at the BRC office.
- After incorporating inputs and suggestions from various stakeholders, the design and features of the foot-operated stations were finalized, and units were manufactured. These units were installed in







117 schools with support from BRC, CRCs, and school administrators.

- All the schools were provided with adequate hygiene materials for daily use. In addition, a set of 13 posters were developed, explained, and disseminated to 117 schools. These posters included key messages on COVID-19 prevention, use of masks, and scientific handwashing method, including a detailed checklist for schools and do's and don'ts for students.



## What Lessons are Learned?

- Jointly lessons were learned that creating scientific awareness about the pandemic among students and teachers makes schools safer and contributes

Result component	Performance indicator	Intended coverage	Actual coverage
 <b>Risk communication and school community engagement</b>	School community awareness on hand hygiene and use of a mask for IPC.	One hundred seventeen schools covering 19946 students, teachers, and community members.	One hundred seventeen schools covering 19946 students, teachers, and community members reached out for the awareness building on IPC.
	School stakeholder orientation on the use of HWS and hygiene kits for IPC.	One hundred seventeen schools covering 19946 students, teachers, and community members.	One hundred seventeen schools covered in orientation, installation of IEC products, distribution of hygiene kits, and installation of HWS.
 <b>Capacity building and convergence with critical stakeholders</b>	Number of teachers trained on COVID risk reduction activities and safety protocols.	Teachers from 117 schools.	One hundred fifty-one participants from 117 schools and 34 CRCs trained directly and through direct school visits.
	Number of meetings held with stakeholders.	4 to 6 institutions.	DDMA, Health Department, Education Department, and CBOs were involved in delivering project outputs.
 <b>Infection prevention and control measures</b>	Number of COVID-compliant HWS installed and operationalized for IPC.	One hundred seventeen schools (19946 students, teachers, and community members).	One hundred seventeen schools with 180 HWS units and twenty retrofitting taps were installed based on the requirements.
	Number of hygiene kits distributed to high-risk targeted schools.	One hundred seventeen schools covering 19946 students, teachers, and community members.	One hundred seventeen schools were provided with hygiene kits.
 <b>Evidence-based documentation</b>	Number of best practices identified and documented.	Identify and document ten best practices.	Ten best practices have been identified and documented.
	Number of project brief and result briefs produced.	Produce project and results brief.	Project and results briefs are produced.

Reached out to 117 schools with 1 to 4 sinks of WASH systems and retrofitting taps.



Ashram Shala, Bhujodi.



Primary School, Dhordo.



Kanya Shala, Mirzapar.



Saraswati Vidyalay, Madhapar.

to arresting the spread at the community level. Information shared directly reaches families and neighborhoods.

- To improve attitudes and behaviors of students towards WASH and COVID-19 preventive measures, teacher leadership is needed. The safe school reopening in Kutch has created an environment that supports teachers through training and IEC products to use scientific messages and advice to students.
- A well-planned engagement of Block Resource Centre (BRC), Cluster Resource Centres (CRC), and



UNICEF Gujarat guides the development process of poster. AIDMI translated and adopted it for the Kutch schools.

targeted schools is vital to ensure child-centered interventions. Such concentration increases ownership of the interventions and brings quality and cost-effectiveness.

- Designing COVID-19 compliant WASH infrastructure in schools requires an in-depth assessment of factors such as availability of water, storage facilities, drainage connection, number of students, building structure, layout, existing services as, and age group of students.
- Foot-operated handwashing stations should be seen as a permanent structures. To ensure sustainability in terms of use and maintenance, the decision to install either a new foot-operated hand washing station or upgrade the existing facility and

- Provided Schools **180** Hand Washing Stations, **12** IEC Products, and Hygiene Kit to **117** Schools.
- **90,000** Families benefiting from outreach poster information.

make it COVID-19 compliant should be jointly taken with the school teachers and administration.

## What is Next for the Safe School Reopening Project in Kutch?

- District officials (District Education Office and District Primary Education Officer) and schools have taken up regular maintenance and suitable hygiene materials for the sustainability of the COVID-19 compliant WASH infrastructure.
- UNICEF and Government of Gujarat are exploring possibilities of upscaling the initiative in other vulnerable schools of the Kutch District from where demand has come.
- Document and share lessons learned about COVID-19 compliant WASH infrastructure in schools to build the evidence base and strengthen the capacity of different stakeholders to implement similar programmes in other schools, districts, states, and cities.
- Advocate the need to invest time and resources in programmes that combine disaster preparedness, pandemic management, and WASH.

## Good Practices by Schools of Bhuj, Kutch

1. **Leverage Private Sector Support:** Convergence of BKT and UNICEF supported action – Jaynagar Primary School (good practice).
2. **Augment Existing Services:** Retrofitting taps at Ashram School, Bhujodi (innovation).
3. **Add Small but Strategic Measures:** School with participatory process for soak pit for foot-operated hand wash stations (good practice).
4. **Use Power of Social Media:** Study by video in Bhujodi Primary School (good practice).
5. **User Driven Design:** Design of foot-operated hand wash station (innovation).
6. **Public Sector Ownership:** Installation of foot-operated hand wash stations in schools - Involvement of BRC as good practice (lessons learnt).
7. **Need to Demand:** Assessment exercise as a good practice (lessons learnt).
8. **Design to Co-design:** Finalization of IEC products as a good practice.
9. **WASH to WASH Plus Vaccination:** School with vaccination campaign (good practice).
10. **Students as Leaders:** Students with required behavior, following and supporting safety measures, pledge, using stickers and education at household level (good practice).

## Who made the Safe School Reopening Project in Kutch a Success?

Many individuals and institutions worked together to reopen the safe school in the Kutch district.



UNICEF Team



District Education Office (DEO) and District Primary Education Officers (DPEO)



Block Resource Centre (BRC), Cluster Resource Centres (CRC), and others



Government Departments Including Health Department at District level (AYUSH), District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)



117 schools covering 19,946 students and 509 teachers.



The United Nations' Children Fund (UNICEF) Gujarat state office, India, commissioned the project. The All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), the specialized agency, implemented the project.