



AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Promoting Safe Sanitation Practices in India



700,000

Target: Improved sanitation facilities for 700,000 people across six states



66,000

Progress: To date, 66,000 households have gained access to improved sanitation



350 +

Hygiene education regularised in over 350 schools

www.akdn.org/india

India Promoting Safe Sanitation Practices

Improving access to sustainable sanitation and hygiene continues to be one of the most pressing development challenges for India today. In response to this challenge, the Indian Government launched the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, or Clean India Mission, to create an open defecation free India by 2019. Since the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission in 2014, India's sanitation coverage has doubled to 74 percent.

In 2015, in response to the Government of India's flagship programme, the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN) launched the Comprehensive Sanitation Initiative. The initiative is a five-year programme aimed at facilitating access to improved sanitation and hygiene for over 700,000 people in six states. A key component of the initiative is generating demand for improved hygiene practices, thereby tackling age-old norms and transforming long-standing behaviour change that improves the quality of life.

AKDN's work also supports the sanitation target of the Sustainable Development Goals, which calls for safely managed sanitation facilities for all by 2030 and the elimination of open defecation.

Working Towards the Goal of Universal Sanitation

The Network is working to enhance access and use of sanitation at the household, school and community levels in both rural and urban areas through an integrated approach encompassing construction, behaviour change and hygiene promotion. The

approach draws from past experience in promoting safe and sustainable sanitation solutions in over 15 countries and driving forward community-led strategies to help achieve universal sanitation coverage.

Community engagement and ownership is crucial to achieving universal sanitation coverage, and AKDN pays strong attention to this at every stage. Women are key drivers of change in their communities and are helping spread messages on the importance of safe sanitation and hygiene practices. In addition, AKDN is also building the capacity of local community institutions to adopt decentralised planning and carry forward the programme.

Working with Government: The Comprehensive Sanitation Initiative is closely aligned with the work of the Government. AKDN is extending technical support at the state and district level in the planning and implementation of the sanitation initiative. It is also building the capacity of the district functionaries, community institutions, *Panchayati Raj* Institutions and Urban Local Bodies in sanitation planning and implementation to collectively work towards an open defecation free (ODF), healthier and cleaner India. The initiative is supporting communities to access government incentives available for toilet construction, and the toilet designs promoted under the initiative are in accordance with *Swachh Bharat* Mission guidelines.

Creating Demand and Changing Behaviours: To raise awareness on key hygiene behaviours, AKDN has also developed a number of behaviour-change



AKDN's Comprehensive Sanitation Initiative has helped 433 habitations become open defecation free (ODF). **Left:** In Muzaffarpur, Bihar, Ganesh Kumar and his mother Sudhanshini Devi stand in front of their two newly constructed toilets. **Right:** Hundreds of masons are being trained in appropriate toilet construction techniques under the initiative.



AKDN is facilitating access to improved sanitation in six states: Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Telangana. **Photo:** To date, the Network has helped communicate safe hygiene messages to 57,000 schoolchildren. Puppetry is one of the main ways these messages are being spread.

communication materials, which are being used to generate awareness on the importance of sanitation, as well as build people's knowledge on health and hygiene. Using a combination of interactive games, and tools such as street plays, puppetry and songs, AKDN is working to strengthen the adoption of improved hygiene practices. Through a cadre of para-workers, it is also raising peoples' understanding of the importance of safe sanitation and hygiene and mobilising community members to spread these messages.

Promoting Menstrual Hygiene Management: AKDN is working to strengthen the knowledge and capacity of women and girls on menstrual hygiene management. A menstrual hygiene management kit – which comprises information material, interactive tools and menstrual hygiene product samples – helps AKDN para-workers and government front-line health workers to help normalise menstruation and effectively disseminate related messaging in a sensitive and engaging manner. This is done through the platform of women's self-help groups and adolescent girls' groups, which provides an environment where discussions can take place freely, and where women and girls learn ways to manage menstruation hygienically, as well as address harmful socio-cultural norms, enabling them to participate fully in daily life.

School Sanitation: AKDN is working to create an enhanced learning environment for schoolchildren by improving water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure. It also supports teachers and School Management Committees to develop norms for the facilities operation and maintenance and to regularise hygiene promotion in schools. AKDN is refurbishing school sanitation blocks, using the *Swachh Bharat: Swachh Vidyalaya* (Clean India: Clean Schools) technical guidelines, ensuring they are gender-sensitive, inclusive and accessible by students who are differently abled. It is mainstreaming regular hygiene promotion activities in schools through the introduction of games, rallies, competitions and demonstrations. This has resulted in student committees being empowered to drive forward these initiatives in their schools and students becoming hygiene messengers in their communities.

Promoting Community Toilet Complexes in Urban Areas: In urban areas, AKDN is working with local authorities and communities to refurbish existing community toilet complexes – and where required construct new facilities – and develop community managed systems for their operation and maintenance. In Patna, Bihar, it has developed a fee-based community toilet complex that is managed and maintained by the community. In Bihar, AKDN is also working on building the capacity of Urban Local

Bodies on decentralised governance and effective solid waste management. It will demonstrate a financially sustainable model for decentralised solid waste management.

Strengthening Sanitation Service Delivery

The programme is focused on strengthening service delivery by facilitating training of village masons on appropriate toilet construction techniques, thereby creating a skilled resource within programme villages. AKDN is also working with local enterprises and rural sanitary marts to ensure the regular availability of materials needed for the construction of toilets.

Monitoring Usage

Real time tracking of household usage of toilets constructed under the initiative is being undertaken through a mobile based application Akvo. This is helping AKDN monitor the progress, track usage patterns, monitor behaviours and identify issues and areas for improvement.

Promoting Access to Clean Drinking Water

Where AKDN is working on promoting safe sanitation practices, it is also working with communities to ensure they have access to clean drinking water. This includes upgrading existing water supply systems and constructing new ones where needed. The Network also helps form local water associations to manage and maintain systems and ensure they remain functioning assets for the long term.



A solar powered drinking water scheme provides clean water to households.

Development Partners

- Akvo
- Coastal Salinity Prevention Cell
- Coca-Cola
- European Commission
- India Natural Resource Economics and Management Foundation
- Larsen & Toubro
- LNG Hazira
- Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation
- Ministry of Rural Development
- Public Health Engineering and Rural Development Departments in Bihar, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh
- Reckitt Benckiser
- Rizwan Adatia Foundation
- WaterAid
- WS Atkins

Support AKDN

Partnerships

When AKDN refines its development approach in a given area, it looks to partners to help expand the scale. A significant portion of the funding for its activities therefore comes from national governments, multilateral institutions and private sector partners. For more information, visit: akdn.org/partners

Individuals

Individuals can support the AKDN. For more information, visit: akdn.org/support

For more information

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About AKDN

Founded and guided by His Highness the Aga Khan, the **Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)** brings together a number of development agencies, institutions, and programmes that work primarily in the poorest parts of Asia and Africa. **It works in over 30 countries for the common good of all citizens, regardless of their gender, origin or religion.** A central feature of the AKDN's approach to development is to design and implement strategies in which its different agencies participate in particular settings to help those in need achieve a level of self-reliance and improve the quality of life.