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What has sanitation got to do with literacy ?

Today is World Literacy Day .

SLWP has long made school WASH its core activity. Rain water harvesting for provision of water for school sanitation has been supported by SLWP's corporate donors which includes Hatton National Bank Plc, Perera and Sons Plc and National Development Bank Plc. In addition Menstrual hygiene programs have been developed in tandem with support from state agencies and universities.

So what has Literacy got to do with sanitation?

Through school toilets may be available they may not be always useable. Toilet cleansing and maintenance systems may not be in place, water for cleansing availability may vary or not be available at all , toilets can get blocked by improper disposal of sanitary napkins and doorless toilets affect the need for privacy and dignity .Even when initial infrastructure is available, schools may lack funds for ongoing repairs.

When toilets are not available schoolchildren tend to restrict their drinking water intake with negative impacts on health.

SLWP studies indicate that provision of sanitation infrastructure alone may not be sufficient; school students, teachers and related stakeholders need training in proper utilization and maintenance of facilities and related hygiene awareness. The link between literacy and sanitation is especially marked as menstruating girls can lose 4 days of schooling due to unavailability of appropriate school WASH facilities.





Though literacy has risen to 85% globally , over 60% of the world's illiterates are still women. Ensuring schooling for women can strongly support the fulfilment of the SDGs. School toilets with water for cleansing need additional investment as they can therefore be a powerful tool in ensuring school attendance by girls, thereby impacting positively on SDG 4. 5 and 6.

Happy World Literacy day!

Kusum Athukorala

Regional Chair

GWP South Asia