



TOILET REVOLUTION IN RURAL CHINA

We aim to ensure every child grows up in a clean and safe environment with access to basic water and sanitation facilities.

Unlocking potential

Clean water, basic toilets and good hygiene practices are essential for the survival and development of children. China has achieved significant progress in ensuring families have access to water and decent toilets. Yet there is a long way to go.

Today, 344 million people do not have access to improved toilet facilities and an estimated 28 million continue to practice open defecation which makes China one of the highest burden countries for open defecation in the world. There are major disparities across the country. In poor rural areas, only 61 per cent of people have access to basic sanitation and only 42 per cent have access to safely managed sanitation facilities.

The President of the People's Republic of China, His Excellency Xi Jinping has called for a Toilet Revolution presenting an opportunity for UNICEF to contribute in increasing access to basic and safely managed sanitation, particularly in the poor western regions of China.

Our programme

Women and children experience a clean and safe environment – at home, at school and in health facilities. We create an environment where communities can expect gender-friendly toilets and practice good hygiene.

Through our commitment to the toilet revolution, we seek to support the Government to stimulate demand and supply of safe and sustainable sanitation solutions.

We take a Community Approach to Total Sanitation which focuses on behaviour change and on improving facilities for households, schools and health. Our approach includes the promotion of good nutrition and hygiene to achieve maximum impact for child survival and development.

Community Approach to Total Sanitation

UNICEF's approach mobilises community-led planning and collective action to upgrade household latrines using appropriate technologies and promotes hygiene practice. This community-led approach has proven successful through pilot projects and has been scaled up in Guangxi province.

In 2014, the concept of "total sanitation" was documented and adopted into national guidelines for the rural sanitation programme which will be rolled out nationally with the potential to benefit many more families living in poor rural areas.

WASH in schools

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in schools is one of the components of UNICEF China's Child-Friendly Schools programme. This component is benefitting 150,000 school children in project sites across five provinces, providing safe drinking water and access to well maintained, clean, gender-friendly and inclusive sanitation facilities. It also incorporates instruction on personal hygiene and healthy living. Several authorities, including Chongqing and Guanxi, have leveraged resources to further expand and adapt the approach.

WASH in health care facilities

UNICEF provides technical support to local authorities and township hospitals to design and construct toilets and handwashing facilities. We have supported national health agencies to develop standards and technical guidelines for improving sanitation facilities in health care settings and are calling for WASH standards to be integrated into government monitoring and evaluation tools nationwide.

Stimulating an affordable market

UNICEF China works with the private sector to develop affordable household and school latrines. We organize market surveys and forums to connect manufacturers with social marketing practitioners. With our facilitation, Chinese-produced products have reached children and families in Pakistan, Mongolia and beyond.

Toilet Revolution in Qinghai

UNICEF China has developed an integrated WASH and nutrition programme for Qinghai – where only nine per cent of the population has access to safely managed sanitation (compared to 100 per cent in Shanghai and Beijing). The project combines WASH and nutrition with behaviour change communication campaigns. Lessons from the project will be captured and shared to enable the approach to be replicated in other regions of China and globally.

“UNICEF has been cooperating with the Government of China in water supply and sanitation for decades to provide facilities, research and develop technologies and policies. The participatory and community approach has triggered community change in improving toilet and overall community environment.”

Mr. Liu Jiayi
Former Deputy Director division chief on
rural sanitation and water

“My teacher has taught me to pay attention to personal hygiene, and now I also want to tell others how personal hygiene is everyone's business, and that the school environment needs to be maintained by all of us, altogether. I am determined to also take my good hygiene habits back to my home, so that my family and I can be healthy and happy forever.”

Guo
Grade 5 student from Bishan district
Chongqing Municipality.

