

Rotary partners HRD and Drinking water and Sanitation ministries

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Rotary India Literacy Mission has partnered with two prestigious Indian Government programmes held in September — Swachhathon 1.0-Swachh Bharat Hackathon and Mera Swachh Vidyalaya — to create awareness on cleanliness and sanitation in school toilets.

While a main component of our Happy School programme is construction of separate toilets for boys and girls, how many of us ensure that these toilets are kept clean? Dirty and unhygienic toilets cause various health issues,

which eventually lead to children dropping out of school. Thus, the quintessential idea behind our Child Development and Happy School programme is defeated. Joining the government programme will further strengthen the T-E-A-C-H programme.

The objective behind Swachhathon, for which RILM was a knowledge partner, is to find solutions to some of the pressing issues faced by schools and communities. The main aim of this campaign, in which we partnered, was to approach

various colleges/schools/organisation/IITs, startups and others to come up with exciting, innovative, novel and viable solutions to improve the operation and maintenance of school toilets; find sustainable, environment-friendly and affordable toilet technology for hilly, dry, flood-prone and remote areas; find technological solutions to monitor the usage of toilets and bring in behavioural change for toilet usage and hygiene, menstrual hygiene and early decomposition of faecal matter.

During the 10-day campaign, 3,054 applications were received, of which 428 were registered, winners announced and awards given on September 8, International Literacy Day. RILM was part of the jury.

With the HRD Ministry, RILM has joined to create awareness about cleanliness in schools and bring behavioural change through interactive activities. Rotarians, Inner Wheel members, Rotaractors, Interactors and RILM's partner organisations took up the campaign in an active way. They approached various schools across India and asked them to engage in one or more of the following activities during September 1–15. Essay competitions, drawing/poster campaigns, slogan making etc were organised.



School children participating in the Swachhathon programme.

Celebrating International Literacy Day

RILM united the entire country for the cause of literacy on the International Literacy Day, with Rotarians and Inner Wheel members undertaking various activities under T-E-A-C-H, the objective of which is Total Literacy and Quality Education.

Activities included anything under the Mera Swachh Vidyalaya campaign, giving Nation Builder Awards to outstanding teachers or any other T-E-A-C-H activity. Rotarians and Inner Wheel members trained and felicitated outstanding teachers, set up e-learning centres, tutored adults and opened adult literacy centres, or transformed schools into Happy Schools.

RILM signed an agreement with the National Institute of Open Schooling at the NIOS office in Delhi for conducting Basic Literacy Programme (BLP) Assessment for non-literate persons above 15, who have undertaken RILM's Adult Literacy programme. Exams will be held twice a year, in March and August.

Rotary and Inner Wheel clubs implementing the Adult Literacy programme will have to register the adult learners two months before the scheduled exam at Rs 120 a person. RILM is currently working out a registration process for the learners in coordination with NIOS.

From March 2018, Rotary and Inner Wheel clubs will be able to conduct the BLP assessment at the Swabhimaan centres and RILM will directly coordinate with NIOS for evaluation of the same. This partnership comes at a time when Rotarians and Inner Wheel members across the country have taken up the Adult Literacy programme with unparalleled vigour. This collaboration takes us one step closer to reaching out to the 28 crore non-literate adults, make them

literate and help India achieve Total Literacy.

Teacher Training

An agreement was signed with Indian Career Education and Development Council (ICEDC) and Global Education Solutions (GES) for providing teacher training to government school teachers in Maharashtra. The training modules include:

- Life coaching techniques to manage behaviour of a class by helping students develop self-discipline, manage stress, maintain motivation, develop a sense of purpose, take accountability for their actions and help keep their peers on track.
- Using differentiated teaching techniques, so that all students within a classroom can enjoy and learn effectively, irrespective of their different abilities, and have an equal opportunity to succeed.
- Simple lesson plan methodologies to impart advanced life and work skills, develop right attitudes and

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Adult learners being trained by an Inner Wheel member.

values across the curriculum, to make learning relevant, engaging and fun.

In RI District 3131 from September 13–18, over 250 teachers were trained. The clubs which participated in the training include RC Pune Sports Club, RC Pune Gandhi Bhavan and RC Pune West End.

Everyday a batch of approximately 40 teachers were trained. The teachers were extremely happy with the training that was provided. During the first two days, 88 headmasters attended the training. They went back to their schools to encourage the teachers to attend it.

One teacher said, “The training was excellent and inspired us a lot. It is difficult to express our gratitude.”

Post training, there will be regular mentoring of the teachers followed by certification of the teachers.

The writer is a past RI Director.

Designed by L Gunasekaran