

Message 3 - Sanitation Contributes to Social Development

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The provision of safe water and sanitation facilities is a first step towards a physical learning environment, benefiting both learning and health of children. Sanitation provides women, primary caregivers, greater privacy and support for maintaining children's health and domestic cleanliness. Schools that have sanitation facilities attract and retain students, particularly girls. Menstruating girls are reluctant to attend schools without toilets, and their parents are reluctant to send them. Finally, healthy children attend school more and get more out of it. A lack of clean and private sanitation and washing facilities discourages children, particularly girls from attending school and these missed educational opportunities have a profound effect on human development. *Sanitation affects children's development and futures, especially girls.*



Supporting facts and figures:

- One in four girls does not complete primary school, compared with one in seven boys (Brocklehurst,2004)
- Girls bear the burden of water collection, which can take many hours a day, leaving them with no time or energy for school.
- A study by the Government of Bangladesh and UNICEF (DPHE-DPE-UNICEF, 1994) revealed an 11% increase in girls' enrolment mainly due to the provision of sanitary latrines.
- The WHO estimates that 194 million schooldays, resulting from fewer incidents of diarrhoea, would be gained annually if the MDGs for sanitation were met. (Bartram, Hutton and Haller, WHO 2004.)

Contextualize this message in your country using local data such as:

- The ratio of girls/boys in school;
- Female/male school completion rates;
- Percentage of menstruating girls that stay home during their period;
- The percentage of schools with sanitary facilities;
- The distance that girls have to walk to collect water.

Key Points:

- Improved learning and retention
- Human development
- Privacy and dignity
- Gender equity
- Self-respect