



Launch of safe water campaigns by Jaldhaara Foundation in Hyderabad; (right) Experts conduct an awareness programme at a school in Kompally, Medchal-Malkajgiri district

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FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

AT a time when drop-outs and irregular attendance at schools are a cause for great concern, a Telangana-based foundation has taken up the task of providing safe drinking water to schoolchildren and local communities, thereby eliminating one of the factors that discourage young children from attending school.

The organisation — Jaldhaara Foundation — has taken up the charge of harnessing the power of CSR sponsorships and taking it to remotest corners where support for drinking water is needed. The foundation has provided safe water solutions to nearly 15 communities in Rangareddy and Adilabad

districts since 2018. It has set itself a target of expanding the same to 100 more communities across the country.

Explaining how the model works, Seema Azharuddin, president of Jaldhaara Foundation, explains that all of the clean water is distributed through Decentralised Community Water Systems or DCWS which are located in 120 communities across India in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Delhi, Maharashtra and Haryana. Fifteen of these are in Telangana.

"These DCWS work round the clock based on the need of the community. Apart from this, we

have Water Health Centres (WHCs) which is located in the vicinity of the community. These are set up by Water-Health, our partner in this project. Each school is provided with bubble tops with water purified from the nearby WHCs and these bubble tops are re-

placed on a daily basis. With Maithri, which is another partner involved in the operations, we are now expanding our reach beyond the vicinity of the DCWS," explains Seema.

This has translated into nine schools with 3,400 students in Rangareddy alone who have benefited since 2018. This small effort of providing water to the schools has helped improve community health, she says.

Fighting water-borne diseases

"As we know, children below the age of five are the most vulnerable to water-borne diseases and our interventions in low income communities are but a few steps ahead to alleviate the problem. As per a study done in 2017, communities that have the Water Health Centres have seen a 21% reduc-

Sustainable model

The Jaldhaara Foundation, led by Seema Azharuddin, takes safe drinking water to rural schools and communities where it is needed the most. It follows a PPP model which is more sustainable in the long run

tion in water-borne diseases, especially diarrhoea," adds Seema, who is also a producer and writer.

The foundation now plans on taking this effort to more communities. "When I saw women walk several kilometres to fetch water from a stagnant waterbody shared by animals around, walk back to have their family drink it, and then later see their babies die from it, it deeply affected me. To fix this alone, Jaldhaara has decided to lead the mission of safe drinking water through a Public-Private-Partnership model for a sustainable solution," she says.

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