







## Life Skills Education-Based WASH Promotion

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS)  

KISS's school-based program targets indigenous communities in India with WASH messaging, rooted in education that builds life skills and promotes adolescent reproductive and sexual health.

Launched in 2009, Not-for-profit, Menstrual Hygiene Management, Behavior Change, Cross-sector, Cross-sector: Education, Women's Empowerment, South Asia: India

Partners: United Nations Population Fund & Government of Odisha

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### Notice

Undefined variable: count  
 ee/legacy/libraries/Functions.php(680)  
 : eval()'d code, line 92 [show details](#)  
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India



### Problem Addressed

The Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) and the programs that KISS runs in other residential schools serve students who come from all of the sixty-two indigenous communities of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Assam, including thirteen particularly vulnerable tribal groups. These children often have a low awareness of issues related to hygiene and sanitation, including little awareness of the health implications that accompany bad sanitation and open defecation. Additionally, girls in these communities often have little to no understanding of their own bodies with regards to menstruation, managing menstruation through unhygienic practices leading to poor health.

### Innovative Approach

Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS) is the world's largest residential educational institution for marginalized, indigenous and tribal children. Its student body of 25,000 includes students from some of the most vulnerable and marginalized tribal communities in Odisha that are often neglected by the national development agenda. KISS aims to break the cycle of poverty in these communities by providing children with a free education from kindergarten to post-graduation, including life skills. Its sanitation and hygiene interventions are a significant part of the life skills curriculum and are imparted through innovative teaching methods including role playing, case studies and simulation games.

The children educated by KISS are then empowered to be change-makers within their communities, allowing KISS to reach unprecedented scale. In addition to an education, KISS also provides these children with accommodation, food, health care, study material, clothing, and vocational training, so as to ensure that they are not held back by their circumstances. Through its programs, KISS has been able to generate a demand for quality life skills based education that has allowed it to scale-up its ARSH program, which currently reaches every residential school in Odisha.

## Program Solution

KISS aims to address the low awareness about WASH issues among its tribal and indigenous students through its Life Skills Education (LSE) based Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) program. The program has three primary aspects. The first is training students enrolled in KISS's residential school program. Students from class seven to nine are trained on ARSH issues, including personal hygiene and menstrual health as part of their curriculum. The parents of these students are also given information on sanitation in annual parent-teacher meetings. KISS provides students both group and individual counseling on health issues along with health check-ups with a gynecologist who is available 24 hours a day. KISS students also make low cost sanitary napkins with the help of the sanitary napkin machine installed along with a huge disposal unit on campus.

The second aspect is reaching students in residential government schools through teacher training. Teachers from 500 residential government schools are trained to deliver sessions on ARSH. These schools include 318 residential high schools under the Scheduled Class and Scheduled Tribe Development Department and 182 Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs) which are all-girls residential schools aimed at school drop-outs. KISS acts as a resource center, providing teachers with technical training and support for delivery of sessions in schools and equipping the school libraries with resource materials. The parents of children and the communities are engaged through the School Management Committees and Parent Teacher Associations to increase their awareness on hygiene.

A third aspect to KISS's work are awareness drives at colleges and in communities. Students in KISS's college, aged 18-21, are trained as peer educators to educate fellow college students and engage their communities during the summer holiday. Peer educators, trained teachers and volunteers hold regular meetings and awareness camps on personal health and hygiene using puppet shows, street plays and other workshops. They campaign against open defecation, increase the communities' awareness on government schemes such as Swachh Bharat Abhiyan and advocate for the construction of toilets.

Finally, in 2015 KISS began promoting research for its ARSH program for generation of evidence and advocacy. Fifteen post-graduate social science students, under the guidance of KISS faculty are researching topics such as reproductive and sexual health of rural/urban, married/unmarried adolescents, nutrition, substance misuse, early marriage, and the impact of the LSE/ARSH intervention on adolescents.