

## Doing things differently

Students conduct sanitation and cleanliness drive

*Shipra Baduni*

The young generation has a lot to teach their communities. They are high-spirited, have a lot of aspirations and, given the right direction and skills, they can work wonders, not only for themselves but also for their families and community. The empowered students of digital literacy and life skills education centers in district Alwar, Rajasthan, are doing things differently. In a sanitation and cleanliness drive under the Transform Lives *one school at a time* Project, students came together to motivate their community members to keep their villages clean. The project work with school management committees to transform school environments into more conducive learning platforms includes improvements to school infrastructures as well as student training components.

The students held a rally in four villages: Dhauli Dhoop, Kalsada, Sohnpur, and Thekra. They motivated school teachers and other students of the villages to participate and inspired community members to join them as they chanted slogans pertaining to maintenance of cleanliness in their respective villages. The group went around the village, house-to-house, advocating awareness of the harmful effects of open defecation and the use of plastics, and underlining the importance of toilets and the need to keep the village clean. They took this opportunity to also spread awareness about gender equality.



Students sourced the slogans from the internet—a newly learned skill that gives them the power to find information at their fingertips. They also searched online for other rallies that had taken place across India, to understand their context, view their poster designs, and see how to do things in different way. The rally highlighted the life skills of these children, their ability to make decisions and effectively communicate their cause to community members, all of

which ensure positive changes in their respective communities. The students effectively mobilized the community to participate in the rally. Efforts made by the students of the digital literacy and life skills education classes bore fruits and helped in empowering not just the children but also all the community members.

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