

#YOURENVIRONMENT YOURHEALTH

PUPPETEERS FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH



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Using traditional story-telling to talk about Environmental Health

India has a long tradition of story-telling using different art forms, which is rarely used these days to convey important social and health issues. Our partners for the #OurEnvironment OurHealth programme, **Happy Hands Foundation** organised two formats of environmental health workshops, which used *Puppetry* and *Patua art* to engage with youth from schools in a dialogue about health and sanitation issues.

In September 2016, Happy Hands Foundation, conducted its first puppet show performance at public schools in Greater Noida. The puppet shows featured women puppeteers from Kathputli Colony, Shadipur, Delhi, who developed puppet shows on different themes - recycling, hand-wash and sanitation and also composed songs related to respective themes. This exercise ensured that these women gave serious thought to the EH issues at hand and themselves become environmental health champions in their communities.

The project continued for next two months where the puppeteers visited 15 different public and private schools across New Delhi and NCR such as Presidium International, the Air Force School,

Government Boys Senior Secondary School, etc. Over one thousand students from grade 6 and 7 attended these puppet shows. Through these puppet shows, students were able to understand different public health issues and learnt how to define and assess them. The initiative ensured engagement with youth from different schools through a post-show interaction and received positive feedback from them.

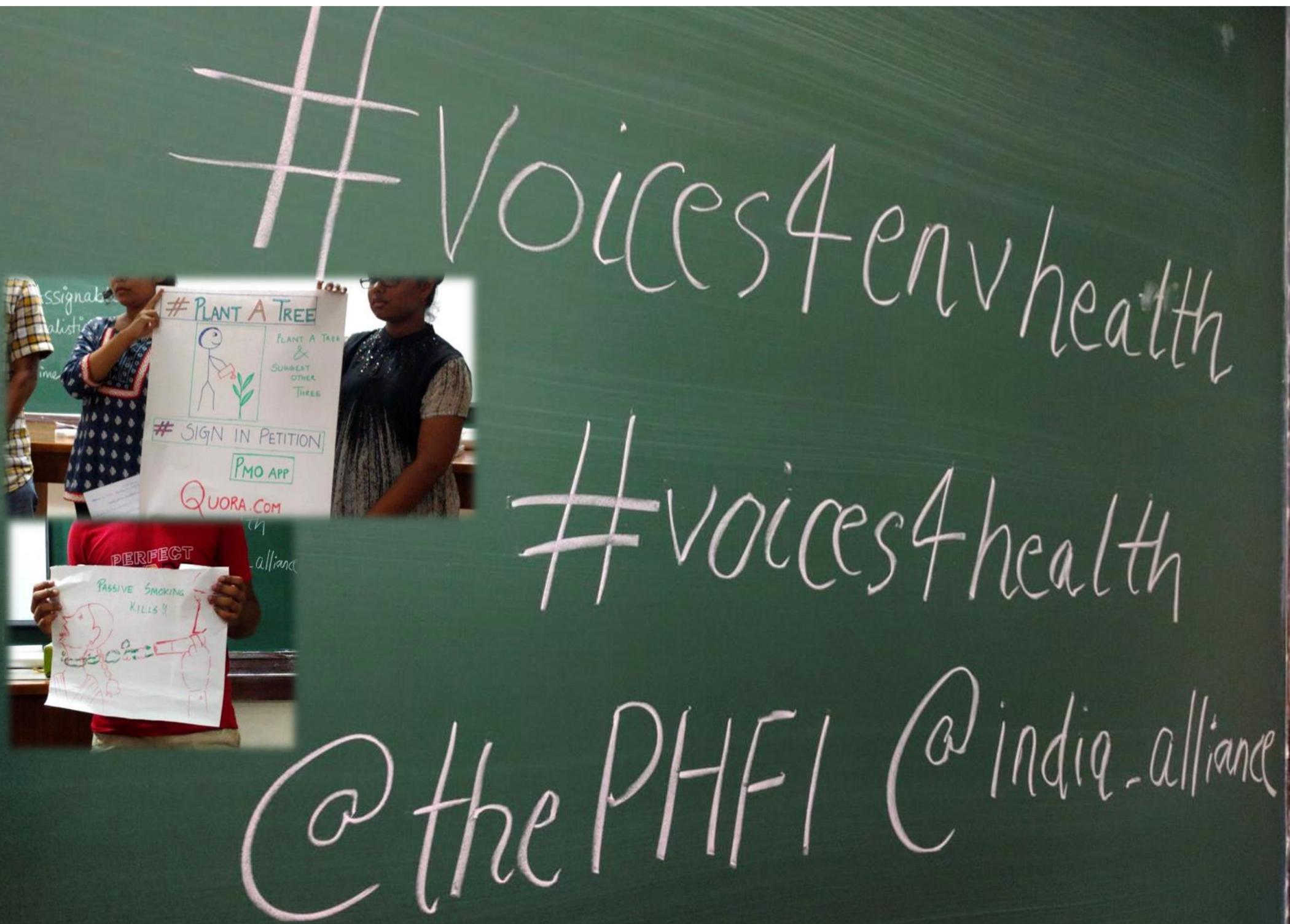
Once, the students were able to gain an understanding of how social and environmental conditions can impact individuals and the surroundings, they had to articulate their thoughts in illustrations done in *Patua*. The students got acquainted with *Patua* which is a traditional storytelling art form of West Bengal and used their ideas to develop scroll stories on Public Health. Each scroll depicted a story in 6 panels. These scroll stories will be circulated among peers, parents, and general public to engage different audiences.

[Snapshots from the school workshops](#)

(With inputs from Rachita Gupta, Happy Hands Foundation)

#OURENVIRONMENTOURHEALTH

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SENSITIZATION WORKSHOPS



According to WHO, 25% of the global burden of disease is due to modifiable environmental risk factors. These risk factors which include air pollution, unsafe water and chemical contamination contribute significantly to India's disease burden. Additionally, given there is scientific evidence that low-level environmental exposures during early life can predispose individuals to adverse health outcomes later in life, it is important to raise awareness of this looming public health problem.

Our ongoing Public Engagement programme, **#OurEnvironment OurHealth**, in the **Voices for Health** series jointly organized by the Wellcome Trust/DBT India Alliance and Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) is focusing on various environmental health issues that India and the world in general is grappling with today, which includes, climate change, air pollution, e-waste, soil and water pollution etc.

#OurEnvironment OurHealth awareness programme is bringing together local community-based organisations, private organisations, area schools and colleges and other key stakeholders with an interest in environmental health and offer a platform for conversation/activities to raise awareness of relevant environmental health topics. Through this programme, we are currently organising Environmental Health sensitization workshops at undergraduate colleges and schools in New Delhi.

Environmental Health researchers engage with college students

"Youth is the hope of our future" – acting on this thought, researchers from PHFI held half-day environmental health sensitization workshop at St Stephen's College, New Delhi on 1st October. At the workshop researchers engaged with the students on various EH issues, such as, climate change, e-waste, pesticides, air pollution, water pollution, through lectures, discussions, factsheets and hands-on-activities. During the workshop students were split into groups and asked to develop and present a community and social media awareness campaign which were judged for content, presentation and impact. Students proposed various creative and innovative ways to engage with communities about environmental health. Through the workshop, researchers urged the students to educate themselves on public health issues, spread awareness and become champions for environmental health.

The second workshop was held at Indraprastha Institute of Information Technology-Delhi on 12 November 2016.

[Snapshots from the college workshop](#)

These workshops are an ongoing initiative, if you would like to hold one at your college, please email your request to public.engagement@wellcomedbt.org.