

AZ, Plan India launch YHP Phase III

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Plan India, a member of Plan International Federation, is a nationally registered independent child development and humanitarian organization committed to enabling vulnerable and marginalized children, their families and communities to be free of poverty, violence and injustice.

The third phase of the YHP aims to reach out to an additional 130,000 young boys and girls.

This phase was started this May through a door-to-door campaign where 1,000 peer educators and youth volunteers sensitized community members on the dangers of heat waves and precautions to take.

The campaign was rolled out in the resettlement colonies of New Delhi covering Sultanpuri, Kirari Suleman Nagar, Jahangirpuri, Bawana and Holambi Khurd, reaching out to more than 20,000 households and more than one lakh individuals.

There is an immense urgency to work on adolescent health issues in India:

- One-fifth of India's total population, approximately 253 million, are adolescents, i.e. in the age group 10-19 years.
- The mean age of onset of tobacco use is 12.3 years.
- Of all children that are addicted to substances such as tobacco and alcohol, nearly 69.8% were from urban areas and 28% were currently studying in a regular school.
- Half of adolescents (boys and girls) have below normal body mass index (BMI) and almost 56% of adolescent girls aged 15-19 years have anaemia.
- Over 35% of AIDS cases reported are below 25 years of age and 50% of new infections are between 15 and 24 years old.

Ms Bhagyashri Dingle, Executive Director, Plan India stated, "YHP is a crucial programme for Plan India within our Country Strategic Plan 2020. Given our strategic goal to improve health and hygiene practices through active youth engagement, the YHP provides an ideal platform for long-term, sustainable impact among the communities with whom Plan India works."

Mr Sanjay Murdeshwar, Managing Director, AstraZeneca Pharma India Limited commented, "YHP is an important program that reflects AstraZeneca's meaningful contribution towards improving access to healthcare. YHP helps build the knowledge and capacity of young people and empower them to make informed life choices. YHP reaches out to the community members and stakeholders to enhance awareness of the inter-generational effects of risk behavior, while contributing towards a collaboration to address risks in non-communicable diseases (NCDs) especially in diabetes. We also are committed to support research programmes that help generate the evidence required to prioritize adolescent health and the prevention of NCDs."

For over 35 years, Plan India and its partners have supported over a million children access their rights to protection, basic education, proper healthcare, a healthy environment, livelihood opportunities and participation in decisions which affect their lives.