



# Youth4Water Plus

Newsletter | Volume 5 | July 2024

“Let’s commit to work together, to make water a force for cooperation, harmony and stability, and so help to create a world of peace and prosperity for all.” – António Guterres



## The Editorial Team

### Prof Anjal Prakash

Research Director,  
Bharti Institute of Public Policy,  
Indian School of Business

### Sahil Sharma

Sr. Manager,  
Communication & Influence,  
Water For People

### Dr. Shakuntala Pratihary

Writer and Founder,  
Center for Research and  
Community Action Trust

### Tript Kaur

Education Officer,  
UNICEF Odisha

### Soumyadip Dewanji

Design Team Lead,  
Youth4Water Plus



### In this Issue

- 02 Cover story:  
Making a splash:  
Conserving  
Odisha's Ponds at  
the Odisha Pond  
Conference 2.0
- 03 Driving Change:  
WASH and Climate  
Advocacy
- 05 Waves of  
Progress: The  
Ripple Effect of  
Transformation
- 07 Eco Guardians  
Chronicle
- 08 In the Spotlight

## Message from Youth4Water Plus

Dear Youth4Water Plus community,

Our journey towards a sustainable future has reached some new milestones, and we are eager to share our progress and invite you to join us in our expanded mission. As always, we are grateful for the enthusiastic & active participation of our local communities and youth members for the continued success & impactful campaigns.

This edition marks a momentous occasion for us, as we have successfully conducted the state-level Pond Conference 2.0. The event was a resounding success, featuring the Pondman of India, Mr. Ramveer Tanwar, as our chief guest. His insights and experiences in the field of water conservation inspired all of the attendees and reinforced the importance of the community involvement in environmental efforts. The conference provided a platform for sharing innovative solutions and fostering collaborations aimed at rejuvenating our water bodies.

In addition to the Pond Conference, we hosted the Creators Social Responsibility (CSR) meet, which brought together two influential youth champions Sai Sethu and Shweta Dalmmia. This event highlighted the power of social media and digital platforms in driving environmental awareness and action. Sai and Shweta shared their journeys, emphasizing the role of youth in advocating for sustainable practices and influencing positive change within their communities.

Our celebrations of World Bee Day, Menstrual Hygiene Day and World Environment Day were also noteworthy. These events saw enthusiastic participation from youth across rural, urban, and tribal areas. Menstrual Hygiene Day was marked by educational workshops and distribution drives, aimed at breaking taboos and promoting health and hygiene.



World Environment Day, on the other hand, was a vibrant celebration of our planet, featuring tree planting activities, installation of Giant-tap, clean-up drives, seed-ball workshops, nature trails and awareness campaigns on biodiversity and sustainable living.

We extend an open invitation for you all to be an integral part of this exciting venture. Your support and involvement are crucial in amplifying our impact. Together, we can build a legacy of change, empowering the youth to be the driving force for a sustainable and resilient future. Whether you are a student, educator, activist, or simply a concerned citizen, there is a place for you in the Youth4Water Plus campaign. I would also like to extend my gratitude to Ms. Sagarika Srivastava for editing this issue of our newsletter.

Join us as we embark on this journey of impact. Let's unite under these critical themes, inspire action, and create a lasting difference for generations to come.

Sincerely,

*Dharmananda Sundaray*

Dharmananda Sundaray  
Campaign Manager, Youth4Water Plus

## Making a Splash: Conserving Odisha's Ponds at the Odisha Pond Conference 2.0

The Odisha Pond Conference 2.0, one of the first conferences in India to focus exclusively on pond conservation, was organized by Youth4Water Plus in collaboration with PANTISS Foundation & IMMT Bhubaneswar.

A crucial yet often overlooked aspect of water sustainability, pond conservation and restoration improves water storage helping in recharge of ground water tables, provides access for drinking water as well as agricultural use and serves the needs of wildlife and birds. Pond conservation efforts in India have been spearheaded by Mr. Ramveer Tanwar, the chief guest of the conference and also known as the 'Pond Man of India', who engages local communities to champion the cause of sustainability and cleanliness.

The day began with inspiring opening remarks from Ms. Shipra Saxena, WASH-CCES Specialist at UNICEF Odisha, & Mr. Dharmananda Sundaray, Campaign Manager of Youth4Water Plus.



Pic: Mr. Ramveer Tanwar, Pond Man of India

They highlighted the need for a community-driven approach to preserve these vital water bodies. Mr. Tanwar and keynote speaker Ms. Abha Mishra from UNDP captivated the audience with their insights on sustainable water management and pond conservation.



Their passion and dedication set the tone for an engaging and impressive day. Laxmi Buduili, a 23 year old youth from Jajpur district in Odisha has taken lead in rejuvenating ponds in her village. She was felicitated by the Pond Man of India as the 'Pond woman of Odisha'.

The panel discussion session underscored the multifaceted role of ponds in sustaining livelihoods, culture, and nutrition with expert inputs from Mr. Sourav Bhattacharjee, Nutrition Specialist at UNICEF Odisha,

Prof. Bipin Das and Dr. Jayakrushna Panigrahi from Sri Jayadev College.

The attendees were also made aware of the importance of the cross-sector collaborations between corporates, government bodies & multilateral institutions for significant and successful pond rejuvenation.

The event concluded with the creation of a dynamic action plan for pond restoration projects which emphasized community engagement, education and policy advocacy.



Pic: Mrs. Laxmi Buduili, Pond Woman of Odisha

# Driving Change: WASH & Climate Advocacy

## Creators4Change: Empowering Sustainable Content and Climate Action



The Creator's Social Responsibility event gathered more than 100 like-minded social media influencers from Odisha, India to come together for their shared commitment to environmental and climate change causes. Hosted by Youth4Water Plus in partnership with Youth for Sustainability, the event inspired creators to leverage their influence toward impressive and emotional content related to multifaceted issues of environment and climate change like water, sanitation, hygiene, responsible consumption and sustainability. Youth champions Sai Sethu, a content creator and Shweta Dalmmia, an influencer, attended the event.

The event featured a diverse lineup of speakers and influencers, truly dedicated to the cause of promotion of sustainable practices and environmental stewardship. William Hanlon Jr., Chief of Field Office of UNICEF Odisha and Chief Guest of the event, delivered a thought-provoking keynote address on the importance of sustainability and the urgent need to address climate change. His insights invigorated the audience, encouraging them to embrace change and work towards a better future.

The event witnessed passionate engagement of the attendees in exploring networking opportunities, forging connections and sharing innovative ideas. The fervour of both speakers and influencers left a lasting impact on the audience, reigniting their passion for creating

meaningful content that contributes positively to the planet. The Creator's Social Responsibility event concluded on a hopeful note with participants pledging to use their platforms for good and to champion sustainability and climate action through their work. This enriching experience set the stage for further collaboration and inspirational initiatives to come in future.

## Youth4Water Plus and PANTISS collaborate for Pond Week: A Tale of Community Engagement



As part of its Odisha Pond Week project, Youth4Water Plus and its partner PANTISS organised Storytelling Sessions around local ponds and their ties to local communities. The event saw the participation of more than 50 youths. On the banks of the serene Taria Pokhari, Meera Das enthralled the young audience by sharing a captivating story of her childhood days and her memories of a pond near her house. She also recalled how her grandfather was particularly fond of the pond and used to help the local fishermen. The storytelling session was followed by a 'Draw your Memories' segment, where all attendees creatively expressed their memories related to ponds, their thoughts on conserving ponds and keeping them clean. The youth shared their understanding on maintaining the cleanliness of the pond in a collaborative manner. Having learnt the importance of clean pond, the participants went to their communities with a new purpose and passion to keep their local water bodies clean for the cause of the society.



## Erasing Stigma & Empowering Girls: Celebrating World Menstrual Hygiene Day at Dhirukuti Basti

Awareness of menstrual hygiene is crucial for the women and adolescent girl's health and dignity. Youth4Water Plus in collaboration with UNICEF, BGVS, Sattvic Soul Foundation, Atmashakti, and ICE Foundation successfully celebrated Menstrual Hygiene Day on May 28 at Dhirukuti Basti, VSS Nagar, Mancheswar, Bhubaneswar. The event, themed "Together for a Period Friendly World," focused on raising awareness about the importance of menstrual hygiene for the health and well-being of adolescent girls.

The event featured several informative sessions covering crucial topics such as menstrual hygiene practices, effective menstrual health management and ways to break the stigma surrounding menstruation. A significant participation by male attendees ensured success towards the latter. These sessions aimed to provide practical knowledge and empower girls to take control of their menstrual health. Additionally, the event emphasized the importance of using biodegradable menstrual products to promote sustainability and protect the environment. A shift towards more sustainable menstrual health practices was therefore encouraged by advocating for eco-friendly menstrual products.

The celebration saw active participation from the local community with many girls and women attending and engaging in the discussions. The enthusiasm and support from the attendees were heartening and demonstrated a strong community commitment in creating a period-friendly world.

### Youth4Water Plus & Partners host Summer Nature Trail at Anandaban



Youth4Water Plus and its partners hosted a Summer Nature Trail at Anandaban, featuring activities like plogging (jogging while picking up litter) and engaging discussions about personal experiences with nature. Participants engaged in immersive nature exploration, such as discovering plant species and ecosystems while participating in scavenger hunts. The participants consciously practiced the environmental stewardship through water & trail plogging, contributing to clean surroundings. They were delighted upon encountering diverse flora and avian species, which enriched their understanding of local biodiversity. All participants shared their gained knowledge and insights, thus fostering a youthful community of environmentally-conscious individuals. This holistic experience cultivated their appreciation for nature's wonders while promoting different sustainable practices with the essence of eco-awareness and communal learning.

A total of 80 youths from OUAT and other colleges also had the opportunity to learn about various wild species, conservation of biodiversity, and its protection through participation in outdoor activities. Under the guidance of Professor Bama Shankar Rath, Dean of the OUAT Department of Forestry, twenty B.Sc. Forestry students went to Anandaban. The involvement of OUAT Forestry students in each group allowed participants to learn each other's thoughts on a variety of plant species, further enriching their knowledge of local flora. At the end of the event, each group's leaders shared their collaborative learning to enthusiastic members.

### Gopalpur Beach Cleanup on Ocean Day with Youth4Water Plus and Sattvic Soul Foundation

In order to champion the cause of community engagement while raising awareness on marine conservation, Youth4Water Plus collaborated with Sattvic Soul Foundation to celebrate Ocean Day at the Mega Campaign at Gopalpur Beach in Odisha. This demonstrative event brought together 200 enthusiastic youth, all united in their commitment to protect and preserve our oceans.

Held at Gopalpur Beach, the day was filled with meaningful activities, including beach clean-ups, educational workshops and interactive sessions with marine conservation experts. Participants enthusiastically engaged with knowledge about the wonders of our oceans while imbibing practical ways to contribute to their health and sustainability.

This event was a powerful demonstration of the strength of collective action for our oceans, highlighting the importance of youth involvement in environmental conservation. Together, all participants along with organizers made significant strides in raising awareness and inspiring changes in behaviour that will add to the conservation and protection drive of the marine ecology.



Pic: A Glimpse of the Gopalpur Beach Cleanup

## Waves of Progress: The Ripple Effect of Transformation



### Youth4Water Plus and PANTISS Join Forces to Advocate for Pond Conservation

In order to raise awareness about previously ignored areas of water management yet a crucial aspect of water conservation, Youth4Water Plus and its partner PANTISS facilitated and organised an awareness drive on pond cleanliness, engaging communities in a dialogue about safeguarding these crucial water bodies. The event saw the participation of more than 100 enthusiastic youth. All participants engaged in interactive dialogues with the Youth4Water Plus team and gained valuable insights on the contemporary need for pond conservation. The youth displayed placards with diverse environmental messages, such as 'Save the pond, save the environment'.

All the mobilised youth participants were motivated to adapt behavioral changes and action around the Scotlandpur Pokhari, representing solidarity and unity for the cause. The team and participants also engaged in plogging around the pond bank. With the participation of local women, the event and cleanliness drive highlighted the engagement of local communities in preserving their local water bodies.



### Celebrating Earth Day with a Plogging Drive at Jhumka Dam, Bhubaneswar



In a collaborative effort to commemorate Earth Day, Youth4Water Plus teamed up with the Sattvic Soul Foundation, alongside esteemed partners such as Ceiba Green, Earth Day Network, Animal Save India, Eco Saathi, Mango Hotels, Bhubaneswar Knights Roundtable 230, Mission Life, and Recycle Pay. Together, they organized a special Plogging Drive at Jhumka Dam, Bhubaneswar, aimed at promoting environmental stewardship and community engagement.

The event witnessed the enthusiastic participation of over 50 volunteers, all dedicated to leaving the area cleaner than they found it. Adding to the spirit of the occasion, Young Eagle Volunteers also joined in the efforts. Their collective dedication resulted in the successful collection of nearly 100-120 kgs of various types of waste over the course of a four-hour drive, followed by an additional 1.5 hours dedicated to waste segregation to streamline the collection process.

The waste, meticulously sorted into nine distinct categories, was then forwarded to the Material Recovery Facility (MRF) for proper disposal and recycling. Moreover, the Youth4Water Plus team took the opportunity to educate volunteers on the different types of plastics and best practices for waste disposal, fostering an environment of learning and awareness. Beyond merely cleaning up the area, the drive fostered connections among participants, promoted cleanliness, and facilitated the exchange of knowledge, embodying the true spirit of Earth Day.



### Empowering Youth for a Plastic-Free Future: Insights from Earth Day Webinar

On the occasion of Earth Day 2024, Youth4Water Plus organized a thought-provoking webinar under the theme "Planet v/s Plastic." We were honored to host esteemed speakers who shed light on crucial topics related to plastic pollution and sustainable solutions.

Dr. Gaurav, Senior Scientist at the HOO, RMNH, MoEFCC, Government of India, Mr. Sujeet Kumar Sahoo, Scientist at the State Climate Change Cell, Forest, Environment and Climate Change Department, Government of Odisha, and Mr. Rahul Tiwari, General Manager at Feedback Foundation, graced the webinar with their expertise. Each speaker underscored pertinent aspects of the plastic crisis, covering environmental, social, economic, and health implications, the impact of plastic on climate change, and strategies for integrated solid waste management.

Their presentations were both informative and engaging, delivering a clear and comprehensive message to the audience. The webinar successfully engaged environmentally-conscious youth, with the attendees comprising over 100 enthusiastic youth from various districts of Odisha. All attendees actively participated in the session, displaying keen interest in environmental conservation and posing insightful questions during the interactive Q&A segment. The webinar served as a platform for knowledge-sharing and dialogue, empowering youth to become agents of change in the fight against plastic pollution. As we continue our collective efforts to safeguard the planet, let us draw inspiration from the valuable insights gleaned from this impactful event.

### Promoting Green Initiatives: Seed Ball Workshop at Guidance English Medium School



On May 18, 2024, the Youth4Water Plus Team and Sattvic Soul Foundation organised educational, collaborative and creative Seed Ball Workshop at Guidance English Medium School in Bhubaneswar. The workshop aimed to teach students about the importance of planting local plants best suited for regions in Odisha, especially in the face of rising temperatures & changing weather.

During the workshop, students engaged in hands-on experience of making seed balls using clay, seeds, and compost. These seed balls will be stored until the monsoon season, when the Youth4Water Plus Team will hand them out to community members. This will help make our environment greener and healthier with the collaboration of diverse members of society.

We are proud of our students for their active participation and their dedication in helping the environment. Together, we are working towards a greener future!



### Celebrating World Bee Day: Protecting Bees with the Youthful energy

Did you know World Bee Day is celebrated on May 20 to raise awareness of the importance of pollinators for the environment? Youth4Water Plus, together with UNICEF, OUAT, Rotary Club Eco Bhubaneswar, Sattvic Soul Foundation, and Pantiss, gathered at Anandavan to celebrate this day with the local community. The event aimed to increase awareness about the importance of bees for our environment and food supply.

Bees are crucial for pollinating plants, which helps produce many of the foods we eat, like fruits, vegetables, and nuts. They also support the growth of plants that provide food and shelter for other animals. During the event, all participants learned about the threats bees face, such as habitat loss, pesticides, and climate change. Ways to protect bees were discussed, including planting gardens that attract them, using fewer pesticides, and supporting local beekeepers.

By the end of the event, everyone was enthused to take steps to protect our bees, and gained valuable knowledge of the vital role they play in our environment. Working together, we can ensure bees continue to thrive and support our environment. Let's all take steps to protect bees and our planet!



Pic: Celebrating World Bee Day

# Eco Guardians Chronicle

**From Trash to Treasure:  
Recycling Workshop & Launch of  
MERAKEI at Old Town Cafe**



The Youth4Water Plus Campaign, in partnership with AIC Nalanda, Youth for Sustainability, and Eco Saathi, organized an inspiring event at the Old Town Café in Bhubaneswar. The program aimed to educate young people about climate action and sustainability, promoting youth innovation for a more exciting and environmentally friendly future.

Around 40 enthusiastic youths participated, receiving used bottles which they painted and decorated. These transformed bottles became reusable items, perfect for home decoration or tree planting. This creative activity fostered artistic expression while also highlighting the importance of reusing materials to reduce waste. The event was a successful step in empowering the youth of Odisha to take active roles in protecting the environment and envisioning a sustainable future.

The 9-month entrepreneurship program, known as MERAKEI, has been launched with a focus on Water, Sanitation, Hygiene (WASH), climate change, environment, and related issues. This initiative aims to cultivate innovative solutions and promote entrepreneurial talent in areas critical to sustainable development. Participants in the program will receive mentorship from industry experts, access to cutting-edge resources, and opportunities for networking and collaboration. By addressing pressing global challenges, MERAKEI seeks to empower a new generation of leaders committed to making an impact in the world.



Pic: Sai and Shweta and Creators' Event



Pic: A Glimpse of Anandaban Nature Trail

**Creating Young Leaders:  
Youth4Water Plus Launches  
YCLAP Project**



As the guardians of the future, the youth of our society also hold the keys to combating climate change. Youth4Water Plus, in collaboration with the Bakul Foundation, the US Consulate General in Hyderabad, and BGVS Odisha, successfully launched the Young Climate Leaders Action Projects (YCLAP). This exciting new initiative aims to empower young people, aged 18 to 29, to take part in climate action and development projects across Odisha.

Ten young leaders have been selected for this 9-month leadership journey. During this period, they will work on both individual and group climate action projects, gaining valuable experience and making a positive impact in their communities.

To kick off the project, a training and workshop session was held from June 3-4, 2024, at the UNICEF Conference Hall in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The selected YCLAP members, along with other aspiring young climate warriors, attended the event. They learned about effective communication strategies to enhance their climate action initiatives. This training will equip them with the skills needed to advocate for climate issues and lead successful projects.

The YCLAP project is a significant step towards fostering young leaders who are passionate about making a difference in the fight against climate change. We look forward to seeing the impactful projects that these young leaders will create and implement over the coming months.

# In the Spotlight ✨ The Giant Tap

"Turning off the Plastic Tap":



Can you imagine turning on a tap, and plastic flowing out instead of water? At the World Environment Day celebration by the Youth4Water Plus campaign, this scenario was visualized to bring greater awareness to the problem of plastic pollution. On June 5, 2024, a "Giant Tap" model was installed and inaugurated at the premises of KT Global School in Khordha, Barunei. With the steady decrease of groundwater levels and increasing plastic pollution in our wetlands, water conservation and combating pollution have emerged as major social concerns.

The "Giant Tap" model was therefore displayed on the KT Global School campus by the Youth4Water Plus team, in collaboration with BGVS and KT Global School. It is a unique, attention-provoking and creative attempt to make people aware about the growing problem of single-use-plastics and how slowly they pollute our water bodies, while impacting human health and biodiversity. The Principal of K.T Global School further highlighted the need to spread the message of safeguarding our planet from plastic pollution.

The event was jointly organized by UNICEF-led Youth4Water Plus Campaign, KT Global School and the Odisha BGVS. A total of 85 youth participated in the programme.

## Need to get in touch? We've got you covered! 📞

Feel free to contact us using the information below:

- **Phone:** Dial our helpline at +91 86550 78473 or any of the numbers given below to speak with our friendly team.
- **Email:** Feel free to shoot us email at [youth4watercampaign@gmail.com](mailto:youth4watercampaign@gmail.com) for any inquiries or feedback.

Connect with the Youth4Water Plus team!

1. **Dharmananda Sundaray:** +91 99371 13418; [s.dharmananda2020@gmail.com](mailto:s.dharmananda2020@gmail.com)
2. **Abhishek Mani:** +91 63940 13068; [abhishekmani831@gmail.com](mailto:abhishekmani831@gmail.com)
3. **Subhrasima Mohanty:** +91 94387 28310; [subhrasimam@yahoo.com](mailto:subhrasimam@yahoo.com)
4. **Priyanka Panda:** +91 79784 69502; [ppriyanka2905@gmail.com](mailto:ppriyanka2905@gmail.com)

We value your inputs and are here to assist you every step of the way.

Don't hesitate to connect with us. Let's make a difference together!

Youth4Water Plus and PANTISS collaborate for Pond Week: A Tale of Community Engagement



Youth4Water Plus is proud to recognize the achievements of our Youth Champion, Punyasloka Panda, who attended the SB (Subsidiary Body) sessions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2024. Held in Bonn, Germany, this conference focused on climate change and sustainable development, providing him with a global platform to engage with international leaders and advocates.

During the SB sessions, he gained valuable insights into the global climate policy, participating in discussions that emphasized the urgency of integrating youth perspectives into climate action. He explored international climate agreements, including the Paris Agreement, and emphasized interconnectedness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly clean water and sanitation (SDG 6).

As an active participant, he effectively highlighted the work of the Youth4Water Plus initiative, dedicated to empowering youth in water conservation and climate resilience. He shared how the initiative educates and empowers young people, providing them with tools to make a tangible impact.

He highlighted successful community projects and emphasized the importance of partnerships with colleges, local governments, and international organizations in achieving sustainable water management & climate resilience.





## Menstrual Health *Champions*

Erasing Stigma and Empowering Girls



**Breaking Taboos: Youth4Water Plus Menstrual Hygiene Champions**  
*Subhrasima Mohanty, Satyabrata Samal, Payal Patel, Indu Nanda & Bishmayee Samal*



**Calling all youth champions!**  
 Are you, or someone you know, actively working on issues related to water, the environment, or climate change?

We want to hear from you! Share your details with us at [youth4watercampaign@gmail.com](mailto:youth4watercampaign@gmail.com), and you could be featured in our next edition as a contributor!



Follow Our Work on Social Media @youth4waterplus

Youth4Water Plus