



# PREFACE

I am really excited about this book and hope that all of you who read it will share my excitement.

This publication puts together real story of real change-makers of our country. Schools that are doing things differently to improve their environment; schools that are walking the talk. It is beyond doubt today that the crises in our environment are very serious. We as a country require more energy, more water, and more resources, yet if we don't manage this situation well it will lead to degradation of our natural environment that, in turn, will lead to poverty besides pollution and toxification. All this will have a major impact on the growth of India and the health of its people.

But learning about environment is not good enough. We need to practice and be the change. This is what is necessary in the world we live in today. And this is what we have tried to do as part of our Green School Programme for many years. We have worked with schools to give them ideas on what it means to be a change maker, what it means to back words with action, what it means to be a 'green' school. The schools whose example is presented to you in this book have done that.

They have worked on the ground to make a difference. Today, they manage their water differently. They have reduced their water demand while increasing the availability of water by doing rainwater harvesting at their campuses. We know that with climate change there will be even more demand for water and managing it carefully will be vital. Climate change will mean more erratic rainfall, more rain in lesser number of rainy days. Therefore, our ability to hold the rain, to value every single rain drop will be essential for our survival in the years to come. These schools tell us how to make that possible.

Then there are schools that have managed their waste better. We know that today our rivers are full of plastic. We know that today our cities have become huge garbage dumps that are both unhealthy and environmentally unsustainable. But what is the way ahead? The only way



ahead is to minimize our use of non-degradable and non-recyclable material while making sure that we segregate the waste we make produce and recycle every bit of material that we can. These schools have shown us how to make that possible.

Then of course there are other issues like our commuting choices, which leads to air pollution; or the amount of energy we use; or the source of our energy; or the question of how much land we use for our different needs. These are challenges that add up to the bigger environmental questions. Tackling them at the local level with all the resources at hand and by engaging students is what the practice of a green school is about.

These stories of change must inspire us as these are model schools. But even more important is that we learn from their example so that we do what they have done—are doing—and much more in our homes and in our schools. It is for this reason that I am particularly excited about this book. It contains lessons on environment which every school, every class and every student needs to learn. And I hope, and believe, we will.

Finally, the most important thing for any initiative to succeed is the way we measure what we do. Because only when you can measure, you can monitor or you can teach and that is how one small drop of change becomes the churning of an ocean of change.

This is why these schools are different; not only are they the change but they are measuring the change and they are benchmarking it so that they know where they stand and what more they can do, as do we.

To the schools featured here, I say, thank you very much for participating in this work. And thank you to the many whose story still remains to be documented. We know that your work will count. It will bring the idea and the practice of a green India to all. I look forward to this journey together and hope that many more schools join us in the years to come.

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