



WASH Pledge for Access to safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene at the Workplace



Implementation Case Study Vedanta Resources

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Introduction

Vedanta Resources signed the [WBCSD Pledge for Access to safe Water, Sanitation and Hygiene \(WASH\) at the workplace](#) in October 2014. The company is implementing the WASH Pledge in all of its sites, and is also assisting the WBCSD in raising awareness on the issue of WASH at the workplace. The company's leadership demonstrates their commitment through internal and external communication, including through a [WASH Pledge CEO Call to Action video](#) on World Toilet Day 2015 with Tom Albanese, CEO of Vedanta. This case study sheds light on the implementation of the Pledge at global level specifically in the aluminum and zinc sectors in India.

About the WBCSD WASH at the workplace Pledge

The WASH at the workplace Pledge ("WASH Pledge") was launched in September 2013 to address the WBCSD's [Action 2020](#) Water Must-Have of *Significantly Accelerating the progressive realization of the human right to water and sanitation*, relative to the 2012 baseline. This is the societal must-have linked to the WBCSD's [Vision 2050](#) of 9 billion people living well within the boundaries of this planet.

According to estimates, 1.8 billion people currently do not have access to safe drinking water¹, and over 4 billion people do not have access to safe sanitation². In addition, 1 in every 8 people still practices open defecation. This poses an immense cost to society, but also presents an important opportunity. Every US dollar invested in water and sanitation yields a return of USD 4.3 through reduced health care costs for individuals and society³, and hygiene behavior change, specifically hand-washing is one of the most cost-effective health interventions⁴. The WBCSD is leading the business contribution to address this issue. An important first step is to ensure safe and sustainable access to WASH for employees at the workplace.

What does a WASH Pledge signature imply?

Signing the WASH Pledge means guaranteeing the provision of and access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) to a company's employees at the workplace within three years

- The WASH Pledge only concerns a company's **direct operations** (extended value chain, employees' homes and contractor premises are not included within the scope of the Pledge, although signatories may consider these).
- Companies have **three years** to demonstrate integration of the Pledge provisions into existing internal processes and adherence to these provisions. This can be done via the WBCSD Self-Assessment tool used for each operation/site.
- There is **no formal reporting requirement** given that the Pledge is a non-legally binding commitment. However, companies are encouraged to communicate about their achievements through both internal and external channels.
- Signatories receive **WBCSD support for implementation** (Helpdesk, tools, Pledge community).
- Non-WBCSD members may follow the lead set by members.

The WASH Pledge also contributes directly to the implementation of the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs). [SDG 6](#) sets out to *Ensure availability & sustainable management of water & sanitation for all*,

¹ World Health Organization (WHO) 2015 estimates. See here: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs391/en/>

² WHO / UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation, 2015 estimates. See here: http://www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/JMP-2015-update-press-release-English.pdf

³ WHO & UN-Water (2014), UN-water global analysis and assessment of sanitation and drinking-water (GLAAS) - Investing in water and sanitation: increasing access, reducing inequalities. Available here:

http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/glaas_report_2014/en/

⁴ WaterAid (2015). See here: <http://www.wateraid.org/news/blogs/2015/october/handwashing-and-hygiene-measuring-behaviour-change>

and targets 6.1 & 6.2⁵ aim to achieve universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene. WASH is also a bedrock for the realization of many other SDGs, notably ending poverty and ensuring healthy lives, among others.

To date, 42 multinational / large companies have signed the WASH Pledge, representing over 2.5 million employees with access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene at the workplace. Within the WASH Pledge learning and sharing community, WASH Pledge signatories share their lessons learned and challenges, and collaborate on advancing WASH in specific sectors and in the global agenda. To access the latest list of signatories and implementation materials, please visit: <http://www.wbcsd.org/Clusters/Water/WASH-access-to-water-sanitation-and-hygiene/WASH-at-the-workplace-Pledge>.

“In India, there are probably 500 million people, maybe even more that don’t have access to clean water and hygiene facilities. The least we can do is ensure that those who work and live in and around our facilities have access to clean water and hygiene. In doing so, we want to set the example.”

Tom Albanese, CEO, Vedanta Resources in the [CEO Call to Action video](#) on World Toilet Day 2015

Background

Vedanta Resources plc (“Vedanta”) is a London listed diversified global natural resources company. The group has about 67’000 employees (permanent & contract) and produces aluminium, copper, zinc, lead, silver, iron ore, oil & gas and commercial energy. Vedanta has operations in India (9 states), Zambia, Namibia, South Africa, Ireland, Liberia and Australia. With an empowered talent pool globally, Vedanta places strong emphasis on partnering with all its stakeholders based on the core values of trust, sustainability, growth, entrepreneurship, integrity, respect and care.

Vedanta operates across the value chain, undertaking exploration, asset development, extraction, processing and value addition with a primary focus on upstream operations. The company has been contributing towards the economic & social development of industry, communities and economies across the world for over 30 years.

Vedanta & WASH

Vedanta has business operations, employees, contractors and customers in locations where access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene is often lacking, as most mines and smelters are located in remote areas. The economic, social and environmental impacts of such inadequate water & sanitation facilities can cause illness or diseases, and impair productivity.

Vedanta sees workforce health and safety as an asset, and the business vision is to embed a Zero Harm culture with a focus on safety and health. The WASH Pledge commitment is seen as a step that

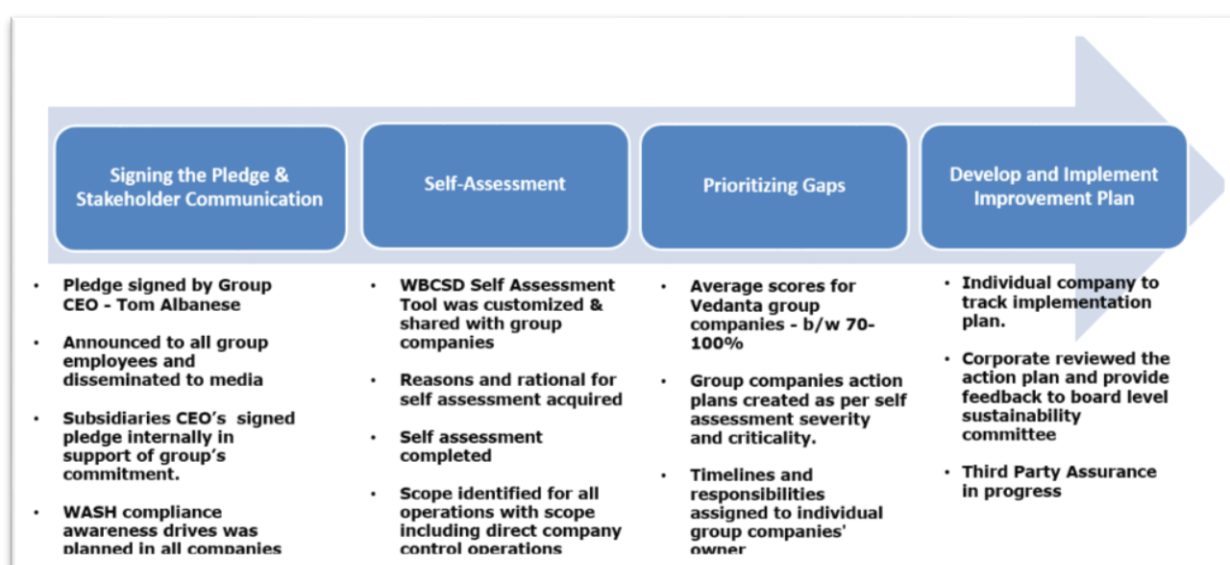
⁵ The goals specifically spell out to: **6.1** by 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all; **6.2** by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations.

helps create a conducive environment for employees to implement such Zero Harm practices. In order to effectively measure progress, WASH Pledge deliverables and responsibilities have been well defined and are regularly monitored. In addition, progress is updated to senior management on regular intervals.

The WASH Pledge helps demonstrate leadership in the critical area of Water and Sanitation as it goes beyond the minimum legal requirements of say, simply ensuring water quality standards. It also aligns with Vedanta's Sustainability Framework, which includes the implementation of HSE policy and Water & Occupational Health standards. Furthermore, the WASH Pledge echoes India Prime Minister's Vision of the Swachh Bharat ("Clean India") initiative, with hygienic sanitation facilities in every home by 2019.

WASH Pledge implementation in Vedanta

In October 2014, Vedanta Group CEO, Tom Albanese, signed the WASH Pledge, followed by individual group companies' CEOs signing or endorsing the WASH Pledge in support of the group's commitment.



Vedanta WASH Pledge implementation action outline

As a next step, each business conducted a self-assessment based on the [WASH Pledge Self-assessment tool](#) in the first quarter of 2015. HSE teams were tasked with the self-assessment as well as with the drawing up of action plans with timelines and responsibilities to address gaps. A second self-assessment was carried out in January 2016. In this second assessment, the scope of the self-assessment tool was extended to local communities in some of the locations (see more details below).

In the second assessment, scores indicated to be between 70-100%. Some of the gaps identified in the assessment included:

- Provision for temporary toilets and urinals at remote mines need to improve
- WASH Installation policies and procedures internally need to improve
- Water saving technologies and awareness raising needs to be improved



Examples of water points and mobile toilets installed in response to WASH Pledge self-assessment

The action plan to address gaps related mostly to setting up systems and review mechanisms, meaning that little capex investment was required. In some Vedanta companies, infrastructure was upgraded or improved. For example, in Bharat Aluminium Company (BALCO)⁶ operations, 71 toilets (including in local communities) and water purifiers along with water coolers were installed in the sites.

In addition, a number of underground mining areas saw the installation of bio-toilets, and remote parts of the mining lease area (such as waste rock dumps, tailing dam, and mine pit sites) were provisioned with mobile toilets.

Next steps include the provisioning of waterless urinals in office areas, hostels, etc. where there is reduced likelihood of dust exposure, and the scope of options for environmentally friendly disposal of sanitation waste / pads generated from female toilets.

Awareness raising



WASH awareness training

An integral part of WASH Pledge implementation within Vedanta is a continuous WASH compliance awareness drive. It includes internal trainings to create awareness among permanent employees and contractors, as well as signage and public meetings to spread the message in communities.

In BALCO, the housekeeping staff has been trained on WASH requirements and refresher programs are conducted regularly. Various awareness programs were conducted at the site as well as the nearby villages including in schools. Signs displaying proper handwashing methods and hygiene messages were provided in schools and shop floor areas.

⁶ Bharat Aluminium Company Ltd. Is an Indian aluminium company. Founded as a public-sector company in 1965, it was acquired by Vedanta in 2001. The WASH Pledge was rolled out at in Korba in the state of Chhattisgarh.



Employees signing individual WASH Pledge

At Hindustan Zinc⁷, employees and contractors have signed their individual WASH Pledge to demonstrate their commitment towards WASH. HSE staff in the company designed an internal training module to create awareness among employees and contractors including canteen staff, sanitary staff, security guards, drivers etc. In the future, more work is planned to continue raising employee hygiene awareness, including:

- increased usage of display boards and signages;
- expansion of hygiene awareness in company colony, schools and communities;
- preparation and documentation of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to ensure safe water supply and good quality workplace hygiene and sanitation facilities
- continuous improvement of WASH provision, including easy access to drinking water, hand dryers etc.

Monitoring progress

VSAP - Internal Audit											
Parameter	Potline 1	Potline 2	CPP 2	CPP 3	CH #1	CH #2	CH #3	GAP	Rodding	90	MRSOS
Compliance	8.5	8.5	10.0	10.0	9.2	9.2	9.5	9.0	9.0	9.0	8
Leadership	8.0	10.0	9.2	6.0	10.0	10.0	8.0	8.0	9.0	10.0	8
Obj & Targets	10.0	0.0	10.0	6.0	10.0	10.0	8.0	10.0	10.0	8.9	8.9
Trg & Competency	8.8	5.0	9.2	2.5	10.0	10.0	10.0	7.7	8.8	8.9	10
MOC	6.8	6.8	9.5	4.5	9.5	9.5	9.5	6.8	No MOC	7.3	9.1
Process Safety	3.3	6.4	2.1	3.1	7.3	3.6	5.4	4.6	1.0	8.4	9.1
Waste Mgmt	8.8	8.8	8.9	5.0	7.8	8.9	8.9	8.9	6.7	8.5	10
Work @Height	8.1	8.6	6.4	5.9	6.7	7.1	8.6	8.9	7.1	7.1	8.6
LOTO	6.5	6.5	6.0	4.5	6.5	9.0	6.5	6.0	6.0	6.0	6
Fleet Mgmt/Pedestrian	7.4	7.4	5.3	2.0	5.8	5.8	5.3	6.3	5.3	6.8	8.9
WASH	8.0	8.0	6.0	6.0	10.0	10.0	10.0	6.0	8.0	10.0	10
Overall Score	7.5	6.9	7.2	4.8	8.6	8.7	8.4	7.6	7.1	8.0	8.6

Example of WASH inclusion in company audit

Progress on implementation is monitored by the group's central Sustainability team. In addition, individual Vedanta companies have supplementary procedures: BALCO conducts a monthly internal audit to physically verify the drinking water facilities, sanitation facilities and hygiene signages. The results form part of the monthly Management Review done by the company CEO. Furthermore, in 2016, as a part of Vedanta's Sustainable Development report assurance process, Ernst & Young LLP (EY) has been engaged to review the policy, procedures and awareness on the WASH Pledge at Vedanta sites. The EY team visited sample sites - Hindustan Zinc (Chanderiya smelter and Rampura Agucha Mine), Vedanta Limited (Sterlite Copper), Bharat Aluminium Company Limited (smelters &

⁷ Hindustan Zinc, incorporated in 1966 in India, is the world's second largest integrated producer of zinc and lead, while also operating in Green Energy generation, owning a 274 MW wind energy farms in the state of Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. It has a workforce of about 17,000 employees in India. All mines, smelters and power plants operate in the state of Rajasthan and Uttarakhand in India.

power plants), Vedanta Limited (Jharsuguda smelters & power plants), Zinc International (Black Mountain mine), Cairn India Limited, and corporate offices to assess the implementation progress.

The assessment confirms that all the sample Vedanta sites are complying with the majority of the WASH Pledge requirements and have adopted best practices within the group to promote the awareness on the issues. However there is still a need to document the activities conducted under the assessments which could be used as a supporting evidence during audits.

Implementing the WASH Pledge in communities



Vedanta Sustainability report

Given the interdependence of the company on the well-being of local communities from which it draws large parts of its workforce, the WASH Pledge is now also extended to cover local communities. More than 650 washrooms have been built in local schools and communities. The rest of the business will follow in the next reporting year. Improving water and sanitation infrastructure for the nearby communities is one of the company’s focus areas. Raising awareness is often not easy, given the need to bridge the cultural gap between communities and business operations which often arises.



WASH awareness raising with communities

Challenges faced & lessons learned

The workplace context in the mining sector is particularly challenging. Mines cover large geographical areas and workers are spread out across the operations, often with few drinking water platforms and toilets. WASH Pledge implementation has helped the company to undergo a review of water points and other compliance related aspects. It has also helped the company in identifying gaps, and in increasing the number of mobile toilets and drinking water points.

In addition, WASH Pledge Self-Assessment tool and Guiding Principles are seen as business friendly within the company, as they are adaptable to the context and designed to be integrated into existing company structures. They allowed the company to easily conduct a baseline assessment and clearly identify areas of improvement.

Implementing the WASH Pledge has helped improve the hygienic conditions specifically at the mines. In addition, the awareness raising around the WASH Pledge has helped sensitize employees on other issues like housekeeping at the workplace, leading to an improvement in the cleanliness of workplaces.

Advice to other companies implementing the WASH Pledge

- Management commitment and involvement in the initiative is very important
- Thorough gap assessment using the WASH Pledge Self-Assessment tool and a thorough survey w.r.t to demography of users (male/female, disabled) is vital for the success of the initiative
- Single Point Accountability for various elements of the WASH Pledge can expedite the implementation
- Mass awareness campaign on the objective of this initiative is extremely important
- Adequate allocation of resource to support time-bound action is key
- Monitoring of implementation can be supported by integrating into regular dash board of monthly sustainability performance
- Engagement and encouragement of suppliers/vendors to understand WASH pledge