

CITIZEN FIRST, SACIWATERS

- **Background**

Water and sanitation sector in Hyderabad is a completely neglected area of concern among government officials and civil society. However, the implications of immense urban growth include increasing unemployment, lack of access to shelter, lack of urban basic services and inadequate funds which is overburdening the existing infrastructure. If we consider the issues pertaining to the infrastructure facilities not been backed adequately with provisioning of urban services, these services falls short and driven towards the inefficiency and often inadequate to support ever increasing population levels. However, although it is the duty of the urban local bodies (ULBs) to address the issue of school sanitation, water supply, provision of community toilets and other urban services etc., due to tight budgets and inefficient service delivery has rendered a situation that has little hope for alleviation. Hence the need for strengthen and modernization of the present practice with increasing effective institutional arrangements to govern urban communities.

Water and sanitation services in the slums at city level require perfection in terms of achieving efficiency and quality. A new intervention by involving the community people extends to enable the sustenance through capacity building. Such that this **Citizen's First** project ensure a change that possible only through sustained pressure from community people and their representative Civil Society Organizations (CSO). Hence, it is anticipated capacity building of community people, establish networks and develop information on WATSAN services through this project. There is a need to monitor closely the issues of drinking water quality, quantity, supply and distribution and treatment of waste water by government agencies. Information and data has to be generated on water contamination due to inadequate infrastructure, improper management and skewed priorities of funding in the sector resulting in poor communities having to pay a very high cost for water, sometimes, as high as their own lives.

This project on Water Supply Sector Reforms and accountability has endeavoured to acquire greater transparency and public participation in the government decision-making process. This aims at ensuring their rights, to improve their standard of living, sustainable communities by creating a space where people get sentient of schemes that were formulated. The thought process initiated to build the capacities of community people, particularly marginalized, in identifying their problem and facilitate them to build up their competence for negotiations with concerned stakeholders.

SaciWATERS brings special emphasis on the issue by developing and inclusive a cross-sectoral strategy through policy and institutional initiatives.

- **Location, Date**

Telangana, 2012

- **Areas**

Urban and peri-urban

- **Stage/Scale**

Pilot

- **Objective of the assignment**

To build a vibrant citizen's group with focus on water, sanitation and hygiene in Hyderabad

- **What was done**

During first phase, intervention was initiated in three wards. There are two primary objectives of intervention for the on-going phase. First objective was to strengthen the citizen's platform which was formed earlier in 2012. In order to do the same, social dialogue and capacity building was enabled for its members in the existing intervention area of three wards so that they can become completely self-reliant in terms of analysing situation and interfacing with different stakeholders. At the same time, in order to increase collective strength (which will increase effectiveness of different interfaces), dialogue and capacity building on WASH issues will to reach the community people and create awareness which extend to generate sustainable communities which could revolt on their issue. Second objective was be to activate government's WASH related service delivery in three existing wards and to ensure access to WASH in all the schools in these wards. In order to do so, existing Basti Vikas Manch's (BVM) in three wards were empowered by intensive engagement on providing technical inputs. It was envisaged that leadership/volunteer base created in first phase will take the lead in the second phase.

Basti vikas manch (BVM), a platform of advocacy and lobbying for poor household areas, is established at the local as well as city level. However in order to be effective at city level, these institutions need to increase their outreach in the city. It operates as vibrant platform which can monitor water sanitation and hygiene situation on its own and interface with the government to resolve their issues.



Key Project Activities

- To empower the community on WASH issues through community mobilization, strengthen local level institutions (BVM's) and propagate understanding on government programmes and developments happening through regular interface with concerned department. In order to amplify collective strength of the communities through social dialogue and capacity building on WASH issues so that it creates a single platform who share the common interests which helps to resolve issues and sustain further.

- Capacity building for students in various aspects such as on WATSAN rights, advocacy, presentation skills, coordination skills, WATSAN policies and child rights etc.
- Guiding the community on monitoring the drinking water quality, hygiene behavior and demanding the rights such as right to water and sanitation.
- Regular training for the BVM members to build the capacity which ensures the well-built knowledge base on upcoming policy and schemes to leverage support from public body and guiding the communities for sustainable livelihood.
- The inception meetings where the Basthi (slum) walks were organized frequently, which help in understanding issue and prioritizing accordingly.
- Facilitate Representation of issues to Government Offices/ Officials/ Elected representatives to get visibility of issue that result in remedy.
- The information gathered is acknowledged and shared with the communities by conducting small Basthi meetings. This enables the slum dwellers to use the information during interface with the government.
- Key meetings were organized with the community leaders, city level interface and conducting Basthi Walk which helps to identify and prioritizing the issue.
- Regulating community through BVM helps to guide the community behavior and awareness about the developments. Hence, enabling the communities in a sustenance manner with regular efforts on dealing with the issues resolved and issues pending are updated by community people at community level.
- Ensuring the recurrent follow up in submitting representations of all the three clusters on the identified issues and monitoring functioning of service and resolving the conflict in rendering the service.



• Impact

City Level Interface

- BVM was successful in building its network with the group of sanitary workers of GHMC.
- The case of Banjara basthi reached a significant stand in sanctioning a budget of INR 8.5 lakhs for the fencing of the open *Naala* which was the cause of the anguish for entire community.
- BVM importunate efforts succeeded in dragging the supreme statutory body of Hyderabad i.e. GHMC in hearing to their voice of rights and demands for resolving solid waste management issue and were handed over to the BVM team for further supervision. It also gained success in sanctioning the consumables for the area for collecting the wastes.

- Through direct approach through media, BVM efforts towards to attain visibility in exposing the issue of open drainage line got an immediate action from the commissioner GHMC for the renovation of the open drains. This initiative has indirectly benefitted around 1000 households of the upper class community who are not members of BVM.

Capacity building

- The key interventions that have been organizing on regular basis for school children and the women for creating awareness programme on hand washing and hygiene management, Basthi walks, Media highlights, Filing RTIs, and celebrating events like World Toilet Day in the slums. Capacity building of school teachers and Anganwadi workers in developing a School Sanitation team.
- Regular training programmes have been conducted for the anganwadi teachers and the school children as a part of their hygiene training programme.
- Regular programme on domestic violence were conducted for the socially deprived slum women who are ignorant about the policies that are pro-women.
- Water quality testing was the major intervention wherein the community was trained to test the water by themselves and understand the nature of it.
- On account of the Women's Day celebrations, BVM Rasoolpura had conducted an awareness session on women protection and their rights. Around 50 adolescent girls had taken part in this programme.

School Sanitation Program

- Under this intervention, In order to revolt on inadequate toilets at Musheerabad School, after several representations and consistent pressure by BVM, team has achieved in sanctioning the construction of two toilets blocks at Government primary school, by collaborating with the Lions club of Hyderabad.
- Rasoolpura BVM has organized a training program for the School San team of Govt. High school, Gunbazaar, Secunderabad. The school san children were trained by team members on different components of health and hygiene behavior. This initiation able to thrive in rousing and building capacity.

World Toilet Day

- On the eve of World Toilet day on 19th November and event was organized with the government school children in all the three project sites to facilitate awareness generation, sensitization and behavioral change amongst the slum dwellers that are currently tiding against the issues of sanitation and hygiene.
- A total of 400 children participated in this event of which 100 were primary school children from Bholakpur, 200 primary and secondary school children from Rasoolpura and 100 children (mostly primary) from Addagutta. All the events took place simultaneously in the three areas. There were stalls on green toilets, cleaner toilets where in people were showcased the idea of maintaining public toilets and children's involvement was an added advantage.

Challenges and Issues

- Involving people and changing mind-sets is a big challenge in the project.

- **Innovation**

Involvement of all the stakeholders (community and their representative Civil Society Organizations (CSO)) has made the project successful.

- **Lessons learnt**

The Project is yet to go a long way in relation to its target of creating a vibrant citizen's platform which can monitor water, sanitation and hygiene situation in Hyderabad on its own and can interface with government for solution of those. However, intervention of past three years has given the confidence that solution to water, sanitation and hygiene problems in Hyderabad was possible only with wide participation, increased availability of information, awareness and empowerment of poor people. The socio-political, economic, cultural and administrative scenario is yet to be influenced by these efforts. Consistency and building of efforts brick-by-brick is essential to gain momentum and also achieve results.

- **Financials**

Not Available

- **Economic sustainability/Revenue Model**

Not Available

- **Implementer Contact Persons**

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- **Sources and References**

- Company Website