



# Digital Dialogues On Wash – Challenges And Solutions

## The Aurangabad Intervention

SBM 1.0 was a success has been proven by what the country has been able to achieve in the areas of Water and Sanitation. 5 years later nearly all of India is ODF and the need for community toilets and where ever possible in every household has been recognised and implemented at every level. The objectives of SDG 6 have been partly achieved.

SBM 2.0 in recognising the gaps is focused on consolidating for the future this enormous and significant win for the country through addressing the remaining gaps by 2025. The key message for the next 4 years will revolve around Sustainability and the Ability to fill the gaps in the 4 phases of sanitation – Build, Use, Maintain and Treat. To this we must necessarily add Water without which nothing would be possible.

The most critical requirement to achieve sustainability for SDG 6 is a consistent supply of finance. In SBM 1 funding for building the toilets has been generated at the national, state and municipal level thus recognising the importance of the program, keeping the need for better sanitation front and centre of everyone’s consciousness. SBM 2 recognises that the different phases of sanitation have unique financial requirements where the erstwhile financing models may not be sufficient and a need for Public Private partnerships is required.

To highlight the various forms of funding required The India Sanitation Coalition is curating a series of interventions “Digital Dialogues on WASH – Challenges and Solutions” across India creating a spotlight on those areas where the need for reparation is the highest.

The first of these Digital Dialogues was held in partnership with **CMIA** (Chamber of Marathwada Industries and Agriculture), on 20th June 2020, Saturday, 4.00pm to 6.00pm. CMIA is the apex body representing small, medium & large scale industries in the Marathwada region. The focus of the webinar was to discuss the WASH challenges in the Aurangabad-Marathwada region and to present a range of well thought-out interventions in the context of the on-going COVID-19 situation.

ISC's premise for selecting Aurangabad and the region of Marathwada was to convene industrialists, non-profits and governments to collectively visualize shared goals for the region. As discussed at the webinar, challenges in the sanitation sector include water scarcity which makes sustained toilet usage a challenge, absence of a technically sound toilet design requiring skilled personnel from construction to retrofitting stages, the need to up skill sanitation -sewer workers for their own and others safety and better school and anganwadi WASH facilities. In addition, there is a further need to deep dive into the need for behavior change education and communication.

Some notable facts on Maharashtra:

1. It would be relevant to cite few Maharashtra specific findings from The **NARSS (National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey)**. Round 2 of the survey results conducted in 2018/19 speak about:
  - a. The percentage of rural population using safe, functional & hygienic toilets is 85.3% in Maharashtra clearly ahead of national average which is at 82.7 %
  - b. 93.5 % of rural population live in ODF verified villages, again more than national average: 90.4%
  - c. An impressive 80.6 % of the rural population practicing SLWM, which is more than 17% of the national average which stands at 63.3%
2. A section of The **National Economic Impact Evaluation of the SBM**, a report released by UNICEF in January 2020; talks about the reassuring social impact of SBM in Maharashtra – The idea of privacy has evolved. Since the choice to use a toilet is available now, the role of dignity and privacy is enhancing in the state. Safety has increased for key groups (women and children), as they can defecate in a closed space. Speaking about community cohesion, people are involved, rather immersed in the idea of 'cleanliness'. The concept of sanitation has been popularized to a point, where households are spending individually to seek such remedies.
3. A series of intensive study reports by UNICEF in the various districts of Marathwada describe in detail the barriers to achieving ODF sustainability. Primarily they talk about challenges such as - increasing number of families, unavailability of skilled masons from construction to retrofitting stages, no monitoring in case of public toilets, single pit latrine being technically unsound for black soil type, less knowledge about golden manure (*sonkhat*), inadequate knowledge about pit emptying and transportation, treatment technologies, less sense of ownership by users, little knowledge about toilet cleaning materials, challenges in regulating toilet usage for migratory and floating population etc.
4. WHO report states the health hazards of poor sanitation are linked to transmission of diseases like dysentery, cholera hepatitis A, typhoid, polio, diarrhoea and stunting. Diarrhoea is one of the leading causes of deaths among children under the age of 5. As a

consequence, poor sanitation reduces human well-being, social and economic development due to impacts such as anxiety, risk of sexual assault, and lost educational opportunities also the cost in terms of cost of finding a place to relieve oneself. Human waste contains germs and bacteria, which when released into the environment untreated pose both ground water and soil pollution risks.

In Round 1, our coalition partners, Yuva Unstoppable and Jagran Pehel provided solutions in different areas of the sanitation value chain – significant steps to achieve sustainable sanitation by choosing to invest in distinct areas of intervention. As their implementation expertise recommended – training and educating sanitation and sewer workers, recognizing their contribution to SBM and SBM 2. Some of the questions asked - can we look at focused training for masons and contractors; how can we score better on school wash and watch its various positive ripple effects unfold; how can we work to make sanitation goals a priority in the region and suggest solutions that have the potential to show results; can we nudge governments, industries and the larger community to refocus on ODF sustainability and aim for ODF++ status.

Round 2 of these Dialogues, will focus on creating a sanitation map of the region, identifying the various players who are implementing existing programs, identifying the gaps that still exist and curating a series of interventions between Corporates and other Funders in the region who are looking to invest in bettering the environment they are part of.

The response from Round 1 has been very promising and the expectation from Round 2 is very high. The support of the local government and municipalities has been very encouraging and the need to cover the rest of Maharashtra under a similar program has already been identified.

Similar Dialogues will be curated in other cities and States in the months to come. The success of these interventions is solely based on the support of local governments, Corporates, industrialists, implementation partners, academicians and the community.

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