



The Water and Sanitation Program is an international partnership for improving water and sanitation sector policies, practices, and capacities to serve poor people

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Case Study

Slum Sanitation Program in Mumbai

Stakeholder Participation Paves Way for Sustainability

A novel initiative that gives slum dwellers and non-governmental organizations a role in the design, implementation, and care of basic urban sanitation facilities is under way in Greater Mumbai's densely-populated slum areas. The initiative is already showing signs of success and sustainability. What is more, it is engendering development beyond basic sanitation in hygiene. Here are some highlights from the case study.



An important outcome of the project has been the coming together of stakeholders in a partnership that enables each of them to play the role that best suits them.



The Challenge

In Greater Mumbai's densely-populated slum areas, which account for more than 50 percent of the city's 16 million-plus population, toilets are generally not available. Where they are, the toilets are in deplorable conditions, forcing the people to use open, public spaces for defecation that expose the city to major health and environment hazards.

The Way Forward

Recognizing the need to ensure basic sanitation services for the urban poor in Mumbai, a project aimed at providing community toilets in the slums was initiated in the city in 1995 as part of the Bombay Sewage Disposal Project (BSDP).

Project Design and Approach

The project is designed to improve the health and environmental conditions of about one million slum dwellers in Greater Mumbai, aided by the keen involvement of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs).

The Slum and Sanitation Project (SSP) package comprises both 'hardware' (physical work, for example, construction of toilets and provision of water and electricity to the facilities) and 'software' (for instance, creation of management and information channels and information packages to the users) components. The program

includes the creation of competent CBOs and Small Local Business Enterprises (SLBEs) capable of taking over the management of the service, including payment of utility bills; the delivery of an information package for users on hygiene, program implementation and management; construction of the community toilet block and the provision of complementary utility services such as water and electricity. The toilets can be built in notified and non-notified slums. If the slums are on private land, the owner's permission is required for the construction of the toilets.

Institutional Arrangements

Participation of NGOs in key aspects of the project was built into the institutional arrangements worked

out for implementation. The Municipal Corporation of Greater Mumbai (MCGM) carries out the bidding process, which enables NGO participation. The contracts include a range of activities based on certain checklists and minimum specifications.

The steps include initiating program information campaigns and assessments of willingness to participate; creating CBOs or SLBEs; collecting user deposits of at least 50 percent of the expected funds; drawing up a plan for the toilet block; getting a building permit from the MCGM; constructing toilet blocks; signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the

MCGM and CBO or SLBE and helping the CBO or SLBE to take over as service providers.

Mobilization and Communication

Spreading awareness about the initiative, creating willingness to participate and, importantly, to raise the necessary contributions from the people was part of a comprehensive communications strategy in the project. The contracted NGOs were given the charge of undertaking the communications exercise and to raise the upfront contributions for the construction of the toilets. The NGOs roped in experts, retired state

government officials, and advertising professionals for the communications exercise. Institutes such as The Tata Institute of Social Sciences also assisted the NGOs.

Project Costs and Sources of Finance

The total project cost is estimated at Rs. 1,260 million (US\$28 million),¹ which is borne by the MCGM with a World Bank loan covering 60 percent of the costs. The approximate cost of construction per seat is Rs. 70,000 (US\$1,500), including the cost of water supply and electricity connections. The

¹US\$1 = Rs. 44.54 (as of December 15, 2006). Conversion rates from www.xe.com. All conversions from Rs. to US\$ are approximate.





community bears the operation and maintenance costs. Before a community toilet can be built in a slum, the residents must pay an upfront contribution of Rs. 100 (US\$2.24) per adult (with a maximum of Rs. 500, or US\$11, per family). This money is put into a joint account with the CBO and the Municipality; it is used for major repairs or expansion of the toilets once their use has begun.

Once the toilet complex has been constructed and handed over to the CBO, it is free for the CBO to set a monthly charge per family. This charge is usually between Rs. 10 to Rs. 30 (US\$0.22 to 0.67) per family per month. For people who do not live in the area

and do not have monthly passes, there is a charge of Rs. 1 (US\$0.02) per use. The money brought in by this floating population is a major source of income for the community toilets.

Progress So Far

By mid-2005, over 328 toilet blocks and more than 5,100 toilet seats had been constructed in slums across Mumbai under the Slum and Sanitation Project. It is being implemented under a larger initiative—the Bombay Sewage Disposal Project. Each toilet seat is estimated to cover 50 users, which means more than 250,000 people in the slums have been provided safe sanitation services.

An important outcome of the project has been the coming together of stakeholders in a partnership that enables each of them to play the role that best suits them. The slum dwellers themselves are involved in the maintenance and upkeep of these toilets through community-based organizations or Small Local Business Enterprises. The community bears the cost of the operation and maintenance of these facilities. Interestingly, the community toilets have become community 'spaces' to also foster other development activities such as schools and libraries.

Highlights

- The slum dwellers maintain the facilities themselves through CBOs or SLBEs.
- The operation and maintenance costs are borne by the community.
- The bidding qualifications and mechanisms are flexible enough to facilitate NGO participation, either in association with construction firms or alone.
- Lack of availability of land sometimes causes major hindrance to the process.
- Various stakeholders work together in a partnership that enables them to play the role that best suits them.
- The community toilets have come to serve as a 'center' for the community, where additional activities have arisen, such as schools and libraries.
- The family responsible for keeping the place clean lives on the first floor of the facility, thus encouraging them to perform their duties better.

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