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Success Story

Total sanitation Campaign Project - Khammam Andhra Pradesh

Khammam district comprises of 46 mandals grouped into four into Revenue Divisions-Khammam, Kothagudem, Paloncha and Bhadrachalam . Khammam has been in the news as being one of the important destinations of tourism, agriculture, industries, minerals and developmental activities in Andhara Pradesh.

Two Mandals of Khammam district viz., Sathupalli and Dammapeta were reported to have attained the status of 100% open defecation free mandals. The ultimate achievement for Total Sanitation Campaign. In fact, Dammapeta was the first Mandal, which had attained full coverage against its target, and further playing a role of a catalyst by motivating Sathupalli Mandal to emulate the success story. In Sathupalli and Dammapeta, 100% coverage has been achieved in Individual Household Toilets(IHHL) the target of 13320 and 11066 respectively. Similar trend is shown in school sanitation coverage with 100% achievement in functional water supply and sanitation coverage in Sathupalli (57 schools) and Dammapeta (102 schools). In Sathupalli 177 km long drainage system has also been constructed covering 55 habitations. Khammam TSC project district has also covered 708 schools against the target of 1034.

Initially, some difficulties were faced from the community which actually slow down the process of construction of IHHL. But the dedicated and motivated team effort especially in these two mandals made such coverage possible, slowly but surely. Many attribute this to landmark workshop held in Dec 2000 enlisting 300 participation from Sarpanch's, AWW, ANM, Community Health Worker, District Project Officials such as DC, SE-RWS, Member Secretary, DWSC, field Monitors and Mandal Engineers. That workshop really played a crucial role in convincing grassroots level participants to encourage villagers to construct IHHL at village level. The workshop was conducted in a participatory manner and enthused the participants with motivation and dream to make their mandals free from open defecation. This workshop was further supplemented by creatively designed community mobilization process, awareness and demand generation through IEC and capacity building of all the stakeholders.

Under the informed guidance of DC and Chairman, DWSC, Khammam, Field Monitors and Mandal Engineers took up the challenge to mobilize the community and successfully presented the good results. They not only ensured full coverage in IHHL and school sanitation coverage but also established WATSAN Committees in all 35 Panchayats of these two mandals. Special focus on rural schools has been created with the help of School Education Committees, which not only made schools the place of 'cleanliness' but also ensured the full community contribution for the installation of water and sanitation system. In schools, physical hardware has been supported with strong IEC to allow children to adopt hygiene practices. This way TSC project has really struck a balance, which in future is expected to yield far better results in health and hygiene.

For the construction of IHHL, all the RCC-Rings were locally made. The rural people purchased their own choice of toilet Pan from the 3 RSMs established in these two mandals. Mayamma, an women from Dammapeta says.' Earlier it was really difficult for us to go for nature's call but now we feel comfortable.'

Success has many facets. The extensive and creative use of IEC components such as street plays, songs, wall painting, etc played a crucial role in making the mobilizing drive more interesting and convincing. 'More emphasis was given on low cost IEC i.e. on Individual Personal Contact Methodology and not flip charts or posters, says A. Giridhar, the erstwhile District Collector, Khammam. He further elaborates that awareness is to be generated through very simple means like personal contact for convincing people to adopt hygiene practices. The effectiveness of the sanitation campaign could be understood from the fact that some 200 villages themselves came forward for the construction of toilets in their villages. Even one tribal village is nearing to achieve the full coverage in the construction of IHHL. External support agencies like UNICEF had provided good help by engaging facilitators and materials that helped in clearing the doubts of the community. Also, a committed technical and financial support and regular monitoring efforts from the State Govt. has paved way for faster and effective implementation of projects within the context of TSC guidelines.

Interestingly, this entire sanitation drive has been carried out without any involvement of NGOs. The credit must go to the District Projects Officials, ZP, Village Community, Mandal Praja Pati Committees, Panchayats, etc for this unique and exemplary achievement.