

Recommendations for Achieving Inclusive and Equitable Sanitation in Andhra Pradesh

Sanitation for all at all times as a goal of national and state level policies. Over the last few years Andhra Pradesh has shown remarkable progress in the sanitation sector. To preserve the momentum of this, it is important to look how well the state fares in keeping with the global commitment to being inclusive and equitable, i.e. “leaving no one behind”.

One globally-celebrated strategy for incorporating an inclusive angle to service delivery is Gender Mainstreaming. It proposes that the concerns and experiences of all genders (men, women & third gender) should be an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. Gender mainstreaming can help ensure that policy-making and legislative work is of higher quality and of greater value for society, because it makes policies respond more effectively to the needs of all citizens. It can also guide more effective public interventions and ensure that inequalities are neither created nor perpetuated. For gender mainstreaming to be successful, it requires a supportive institutional structure that can ensure the principles of inclusiveness and equity and strongly adhered to.




Under the project *Intersectionality-Informed Framework for Implementation of Effective Gender Mainstreaming in WSH: Andhra Pradesh*, social mobilisation platforms were set up at neighbourhood and city level in Anantapur, Kovvur and Narsapur. These structures were not only based on the principles of Gender Mainstreaming, but also enshrined inclusiveness to the highest extent possible by considering the unique experiences of various socially and occupationally marginalised groups. Reports from these cities show a positive and encouraging impact in access to sanitation for marginalised and disadvantaged communities residing in the cities.

Experience from Anantapur, Narsapur, Kovvur

Creating and capacitating social mobilisation platforms are critical components of successful gender mainstreaming. The experience from three cities of Andhra Pradesh (Anantapur, Narsapur and Kovvur) has shown demonstration of implementing gender mainstreaming strategies by institutionalising Gender Forums (GF) at urban poor settlements and Gender Resource (GRC) at the Urban Local Body. GFs have been constituted in the highly vulnerable slums in the three cities with participation from transgender persons, sex workers, unorganised sector workers, members of Self Help Groups (SHGs), Slum Level Federations (SLFs), Area Level Federations (ALF), town Level Federations, ASHA workers etc. A GRC Forum has been federated at the city level for each city involving the ULB, MEPMA and frontline leaders and volunteers from GFs.

GFs and GRCs have successfully created discussions around issues involving sanitation; they encourage participation from socially excluded groups, understand their role in improving access to sanitation, contribute towards multi-stakeholder consultations, and demonstrate problem-solving capabilities. GFs and GRC Forum are collectively working, co-managing on understanding the gaps, identifying priorities and generating ownership amongst the users and providers by doing door- door campaigns, training and awareness generation on MHM, school sanitation, organizing public hearings, settlement level meetings, organizing child cabinet. Details of GFs and GRCs constituted in each city is given in Table 1. The city level MEPMA office has played an instrumental role in capacitating and institutionalizing these participatory platforms in the ULBs. To ensure sustainability of these efforts, Gender Sub-Groups are being established within City Sanitation Taskforces (CSTFs). The GRCs are envisioned as the secretariat of the GSGs, which will assist the CSTFs in preparing an inclusive and equitable City Sanitation Plans.

Table 1: Impact of Gender Forums and Gender Resource Centres

Active GFs and GRCs	 Addressing sanitation infrastructure issues	 Awareness/ Training capacity	 Encouraging participation
Anantapur 14+ GFs GRC activated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 954 issues on IHHLs, Solid Waste Management, Health, Infrastructure addressed and resolved 25 IHHL application submitted 4 stakeholder meetings, 2 public hearings, 20 settlement meetings conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 300 women and girls trained on Menstrual Hygiene Management, through 4 trainings 150 school children reached through 4 meetings Training of trainers of 30 women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GFs members include 10 Transgender workers, 29 Sex Workers, 7 Asha workers and 7 disabled workers
Narasapur 8+ GFs GRC activated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 63 IHHL application submitted Madavaipalem community toilet upgraded 8 settlement meetings conducted along with FGDs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 women and girls have been capacitated by GFs and Mahila Arogya Samiti 40 school children educated on hand washing and personal hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 slums selected to expand GF members
Kovvur 6+ GFs GRC activated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 230 problems resolved out of 240 11 IHHL application submitted 2 stakeholder meetings and 7 settlement meetings conducted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness campaigns on Menstrual Hygiene Management, Open defecation, Personal hygiene, Nutrition, etc. 	

GFs- Gender Forums GRCs- Gender Resource Centres IHHLs- Individual Household Latrine

Recommendations for the state-level actions

It is important to sustain the momentum created in the three cities by strengthening coordination between the GFs, GRCs and the ULB. It is also essential to replicate this model successfully in other cities in Andhra Pradesh to realise full potential of the gender mainstreaming efforts and achieve the intent of the State Sanitation Strategy in its true sense. This calls for reciprocal actions to be initiated at state and city-levels by creating appropriate institutional platforms and designing suitable revisions in programme delivery instruments. Following are the proposed recommendations to be taken forward by the Andhra Pradesh Government to become a pioneer in implementing the inclusive sanitation agenda in the country. Our recommendations for effective coordination between all stakeholders involving the proposed gender mainstreaming platforms is illustrated in annexure 1.

▪ **Create a gender resource unit in Swachh Andhra Corporation**

We propose the establishment of a mirror structure (Gender Sub-group) at the state level, under the steering committee of the Andhra State Sanitation Strategy. Similar to the city level structure, this sub-group will be convened by a Gender Resource Unit, presided over by a Gender Specialist from Swachh Andhra Corporation. This sub-group can provide the directive for CSTFs to expand their constitution and set up their own Gender Sub-Groups as well as monitor the inclusiveness of sanitation service delivery across the state.

▪ **Expanding the scope of CSTF to bring inclusion and equity**

For the CSTF Gender Sub-groups to be effective, the CSTF should feature participation of representatives of disadvantaged groups as well as key organisations working with them. The constituency of the CSTFs as well their mandates must therefore be enhanced. Recommendations on amendments in the CSTF circular that will help facilitate GSGs is provided as an attachment to this brief.

▪ **Mainstreaming Gender into the State Sanitation Strategy**

Principles of Gender Mainstreaming as well as institutional mechanisms for implementing gender mainstreaming need to be integrated into the SSS to ensure state-wide commitment to inclusive and equitable sanitation.