



# Citizens' Platform for WASH Services

**CWAS** CENTER  
FOR WATER  
AND SANITATION

**CRDF** CEPT RESEARCH  
AND DEVELOPMENT  
FOUNDATION

**CEPT**  
UNIVERSITY

**Karan Ashok Patil | PUI20160**

Masters of Urban Infrastructure

Faculty of Planning

Batch of 2020 - 22

Guided by

**Arwa Bharmal and Kasturi Joshi**

# Citizens' Platform for WASH Services

---



**Patil Karan Ashok**  
**Roll №: PUI20160**

**Arwa Bharmal**  
**Kasturi Joshi**

---

**Faculty of Planning**

**CEPT**  
**UNIVERSITY**

**2022**

**Ahmedabad, India**

**Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Publications:**

The copyright for this report shall remain equally with the Center for Water and Sanitation and CEPT University. All publications arising from this research/thesis project will acknowledge the concerned members of the organizations.

Center for Water and Sanitation and CEPT University reserve the right to use the outputs of the research/thesis project for dissemination and publicity ensuring proper acknowledgment to the Student and Supervisor/s.

## **Abstract**

---

Citizen engagement and participation are essential activities that provide citizens a voice to express their needs, concerns, and aspirations. The WASH services are basic services towards which every citizen has a right, and these services need the involvement of citizens for better service delivery. However, most of these services are not delivered equitably. So to address such issues and have citizens and government interaction in improving service delivery of WASH services, channels are needed to foster the engagement and communication between user and service provider. However, fewer such engagement platforms are available at the local government level, especially in small and medium towns. This lack of communication and engagement channels significantly impacts the citizens' quality of life, improper budget allocation, inequitable service delivery, and lack of transparency and accountability. Thus, this research aims at exploring various platforms for citizens' engagement with the service providers and building and developing the WASH services through a collaborative approach for better achieving the better service delivery, knowing citizen aspirations and demands, maintaining the transparency and accountability, developing a wide range of meaningful datasets and developing a sense of ownership in citizens towards the WASH services. This can be accomplished by reviewing and assessing the platform through three different perspectives, and for assessing the citizen and government perspectives, the small and medium towns were assessed by selecting the case city as Shahada. In Shahada, the survey of government officials and political leaders, i.e., ex-mayors and councilors, and 155 household surveys were carried out to know comfortability and opinion through such initiatives. By analyzing all three perspectives, the findings showcase that digital penetration has observed an increasing trend, but citizens' awareness about existing platforms of citizen engagement is very low. In addition, gender-wise variability, age-wise variability, and income-wise variability are observed in terms of the comfortable platform for citizen engagement. The urban local bodies are making efforts to engage the citizen. However, due to constraints like lack of human resources, skilled workforce, and technical abilities, the engagement activities are less efficient and are less active. Considering all the factors and findings, recommendations were suggested for improving the citizen engagement platform in small and medium towns by providing the platform selection framework, suggestions

regarding interlinking the citizen engagement platform to the existing missions, evaluation & monitoring surveys, and its institutionalization process that includes capacity building, citizen engagement plan formulation and awareness creation and branding of the adapted platform by urban local bodies for engaging the citizens. The study shows that a city is complex and has complex dynamics of demographics, and recent trends in development focus on bringing citizens on board to improve decision-making and service delivery. This process requires an engagement medium, and the requirement of the medium varies as per the age, the purpose of the engagement, gender, and income. This suggests that one platform is not suitable for the city to adapt; moreover, cities have to integrate various platforms to have a more inclusive engagement which can lead to improvement in service delivery, understanding different citizens group needs and aspirations, achieving transparency and accountability, making an informed decision and achieving citizens consensus towards a certain activity and building sense of ownership in citizens and trust between citizen and government for better functioning of city's basic service