



The Mahad Story

Making of an Open Defecation Free City

January 2013

Acknowledgments

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Further, based on the analysis of the Census 2011 information and the annual data collated under the PAS Project, the PAS team has shortlisted around a dozen cities in Maharashtra, which are potentially free of open defecation. The PAS team has strong intentions of following up and documenting these cases, which could show the way to other cities to achieve open defecation free status.

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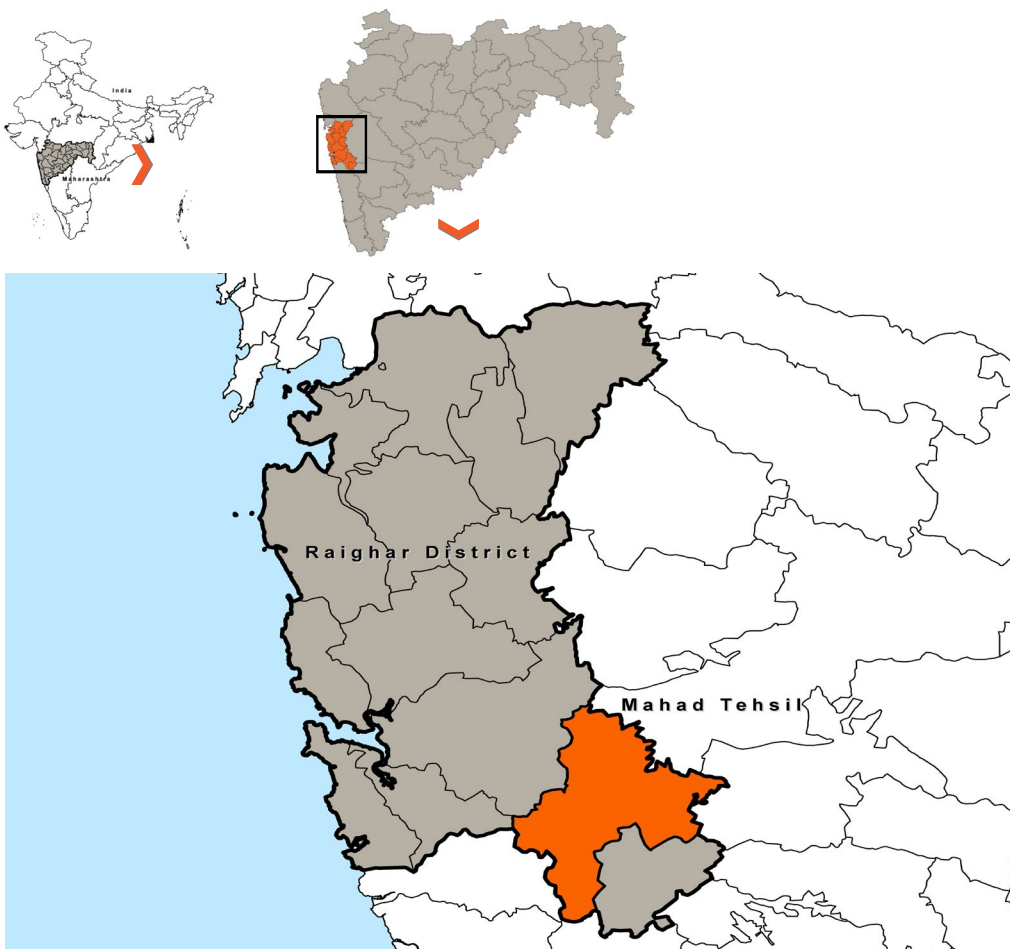
Mahad – A City Profile

Mahad, situated in the Raigad district of Konkan region, is in the state of Maharashtra. It is about 175 km south of Mumbai. Located on the banks of two rivers Savitri and Gandhari and surrounded by the Sahyadri mountain range, it is famous for its pleasant climate and scenic beauty.

Description, 'Savistar Tippani', undated). In fact, the name "Mahad" appears to have originated from "Maha-Haat" – a large market place. There are historical records tracing the religious importance of Mahad's many temples during the Maratha rule.

Mahad, a historic city with oldest municipal council in Raigad district claims to be ODF city.

Figure 1: Location of Mahad



It has a long Buddhist and Maratha history. After the Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji established Raigad Fort as his capital, Mahad, about 30 km away, emerged as a vibrant market place. Traders of this small hamlet started supplying goods to the Fort (Mahad Municipal Council, Detailed

As far back as 1840, the first Marathi School of the Raigad district was setup in this town. Later in 1874, the citizens of Mahad came together to establish a public library followed by a public hospital in 1887 (ibid.). It also has an illustrious association with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, who undertook a successful

'Water Satyagraha' on 20th March, 1927 to highlight the denial of water to the Dalits of the city from the Chavder Lake (mahadelection.org). This incident gained historic significance giving rise to a National Memorial in this city. Mahad is well known for its active involvement in the freedom struggle of India.

of PAS, the percentage of households with individual toilets stands at 64 and those with access to community toilets at 35. This implies that about 99 percent of households have access to toilets either individual or community. This high percentage of toilet coverage suggests

Table 1: Profile of Mahad Municipal Council

District	Raigad
Area	4.07 km
Total City Population (Census 2011, Provisional)	27,531
Total City Population (Census 2001)	24,276
Total Households (Census 2011, Provisional)	6,369
Total Households (Census 2001)	5,287
Density (Persons Per Sq. Km)	7,561
Total Number Of Slum Settlements	0
Total Number Of Electoral Wards	17
Total Number Of Municipal Staff members	139
Annual Budget (2012) (Rs in million)	8.9

Source: Mahad Municipal Council

Mahad Municipal Council

The Municipal Council of Mahad (MMC), established on 15th August, 1866, is the oldest Council in Raigad district. Presently, it is a class 'C' Municipal Council, spread over the area of 4.07 sq. km. As per the recent Census of 2011, it has a population of 27,531 with 5,287 households and a density of about 7,561 persons per sq.km. The city is divided into 17 wards, with an elected representative for each ward. The total number of Municipal staff is 139 (Table 1). Mahad claims to be a completely slum free city.

Service Levels in Mahad

A total of 3.6 million litres per day (MLD) water is produced in the city. The water distribution network covers the entire city. There are 3,946 water connections suggesting a household coverage of 62 percent. There is no underground sewerage network and the entire city's wastewater is connected to open drains, which is about 4.5 sq. km long. A unique feature of Mahad is the toilet coverage. According to the data collection rounds

that Mahad is likely to be an Open Defecation Free (ODF) city.

Mahad – Discovering an Open Defecation Free City

Observing the very high percentage of toilet coverage in Mahad reported by the ULB, the PAS team undertook a validation exercise to establish data reliability and assess the local situation. The close to 99 percent coverage potentially made Mahad an "Open Defecation Free" city. A series of discussions were held with the Mahad Municipal Council (MMC) officials to corroborate data authenticity. MMC officials, in turn, displayed a high level of confidence in the status of Mahad as being 'ODF'. Following this, a team from the PAS Project visited the city. The team identified a number of locations that are generally found to be susceptible to open defecation – such as: unattended or residual open spaces, areas surrounding community toilets, along open sewers or river banks, relatively unfrequented locations on the outskirts of the city and the dumping grounds of city waste.

Well maintained open spaces in Mahad which are free of open defecation



Along the river



On the Open grounds



Unattended open areas



Along the streets

The team undertook a number of early morning visits to these locations. During these repeated visits, not a single resident was found to be defecating in the open. The city has a total of 59

community toilets blocks. Site visits to community toilets revealed a reasonably well maintained infrastructure. Discussions with the municipal officials pointed to the fact that at various junctures the Council had responded to the lack of toilets for its population and tried to bridge the gap. Similarly, during informal conversations with the town residents, they stressed their reluctance to engage in open defecation. It was clear from the Validation Exercise that Mahad was a town that had indeed achieved an ODF status. This reflected the persistent efforts undertaken over a long period of time. What follows is this journey of Mahad towards becoming an “Open Defecation Free” city.

Discussions with Mahad residents, Chief Officer of MMC during validation exercise



Discussions with Mahad residents, Chief Officer of MMC during validation exercise



The ODF Initiative in Mahad: The Early Process

The process of making Mahad an open defecation free city started in early eighties – much before the emergence of a global focus on ODF cities. The lead was taken by local leaders and included both social measures and provision of physical infrastructure.

Creating Social Pressure

The foundation for making Mahad ODF was laid in the early nineteen eighties by the then President of the Council, Mr. S. S. Sawant, who was a well respected Advocate. He observed that defecating in the open was a widely prevalent practice amongst the town's residents. As a response, he initiated a campaign to educate and convince them to discontinue the same. Handbills were distributed from time to time explaining its ill effects and exhorting the people to use community toilets. This had a limited impact and people continued to defecate in the open.

He realised that it was necessary to employ other means of dissuading residents. Thus, as a parallel strategy, the President and the MMC officials undertook very early morning rounds of the city (4.30 a.m. to 8 a.m.) and took photographs of those found defecating in the open. These photographs were then published in the local newspapers. Those who continued despite this 'expose' and repeated warnings were levied fines. Not stopping at that, the Council took severe action against stubborn offenders and filed cases in the Mahad Civil Court against them.

From time to time, the MMC Sanitary Inspector continued with these morning vigilance rounds, thus creating constant pressure on the citizens. Exposing the errant individuals by publishing their photographs also attached a social stigma and shame to this practice. As a parallel activity, in 1982, MMC converted

all dry pit latrines to pour flush latrines and put an end to manual scavenging.

Mr. Sawant led the Mahad Council from 1985 to 1996 and then again from 2001 till 2006. Under his long tenure for an uninterrupted eleven years, MMC accorded a high priority to stop open defecation and thus, all efforts towards this goal continued unabated. Council Presidents, who succeeded him in the intervening period (1997-2000), also maintained this focus and strategy.

Creating an infrastructure of community toilets

During this duration, it was also observed that in some areas citizens resorted to open defecation not out of choice but compulsion as they did not have any individual toilets and there were no community toilets in the vicinity of their residence. To mitigate this, MMC identified locations closest to the communities that lacked such access and constructed new community toilets there using their own funds. Initially, these were built on government land. However, this was not always possible as often the identified locations were on private land.

Toilets on Private Land – A Unique

Arrangement: MMC MMC has over the years built many community toilets on private lands. For this, a unique strategy was employed. Mr. Sawant personally went to the land owners with the request to construct community toilet blocks on their land. In a series of meetings, he persuaded them to grant permission to the Council. Once convinced, each private landowner gave a 'Permission Letter (Sammati Patra)' and a 'No Objection Certificate (NOC)' to MMC. What is noteworthy is that there was no incentive or compensation granted to the land owner for surrendering part of

The process of making 'Open Defecation Free' through social pressure and creating infrastructure.

the land. Moreover, there was no apparent guarantee that this land would be returned back to the owner in the future if so desired by him/her. Despite this, landowners seem to have willingly surrendered the required portion of their land for community toilets. As recalled by the Council Officials, “Mr. Sawant’s untiring efforts were there for us all to see. His personal conduct was also exemplary. In this background, when he approached private landowners with requests, they too felt part of a larger initiative. Few resisted. Why only for toilets, there were cases in which landowners freely gave out small portions of land for road construction under the Development Plan”.

Due to this unique arrangement between MMC and the private land owners, a wide network of community toilets could be created, mostly on the outskirts of the city.

Child Friendly Arrangements: In some cases, it was observed that children accompanying adults continued defecating in the open as the community toilets were not child friendly. As a means to circumvent this, MMC constructed small, open footpaths just adjoining these blocks. These were about five feet wide with an open gutter, which was joined to the septic tank. The footpath was cleaned daily by the conservancy staff. Children found this far more agreeable. Gradually, they too started using the community toilets.

Legislative Provision for Provision of Toilets: In the nineteen eighties, it was made mandatory for all new residential properties to construct individual toilets on their premises in order to be granted building permission.

Persistent Efforts Continue

The efforts initiated in eighties to make the city open defecation free continued unabated in Mahad over the next two decades. In 2007 this gained further momentum with a toilet survey followed by measures to strengthen the toilet infrastructure.

The 2007 Toilet Survey of Individual and Community Toilets

Regular vigilance, exposing the errant individuals and thus bringing about social pressure continued from time to time. However, not stopping at that MMC undertook another proactive decision – to conduct a comprehensive “Toilet Survey” in 2007. For enumerating individual toilets, the city was divided into two zones and two separate registers were kept for the same. Detailed information on - property number, name of owner, type of toilet, septic tank/others, disposal of waste (municipal drains, soak pit) and type of toilet

(individual/community) was gathered (Table 2). This entire exercise was carried out by the staff of MMC. Similarly, an extensive survey of community toilets vis-à-vis their availability and present condition was undertaken. The survey included detailed information on location, total number of blocks, number of seats available (male and female), land ownership pattern (government, municipal council, private), and type of toilet. As per the categories outlined by the MMC, an inventory of community (public), shared as well as pay-and-use toilets in the city was made. A qualitative assessment of their physical condition was also done.

This survey enabled MMC to identify community toilets that had inadequate seats, were in a state of disrepair, or were in a completely dilapidated condition and thus could no longer be used. A number of these were on private lands.

Successful individual and Community Toilet surveys in 2007 to strengthen the toilet infrastructure

Table 2: Survey of individual toilets

क्र.सं.	घर क्रमांक	व्यक्तिगत नाव	संभावित प्रजाति		संभावित प्रजाति		संभावित प्रजाति	
			पुरुष	महिला	म.उ. प्रजाति	सामूहिक	संभावित प्रजाति	संभावित प्रजाति
1	208	शरद वैजनाथ पुत	1					
2	208	कमलकांत भास्करा होम	1					
3		सुनील भास्करा चौधरी	1					
4	144	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
5	144	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
6	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
7	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
8	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
9	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
10	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
11	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
12	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
13	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
14	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
15	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
16	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
17	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
18	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
19	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					
20	142	सुरेश चक्रवर्ती लो	1					

Table 3: Survey of availability and present condition of toilets

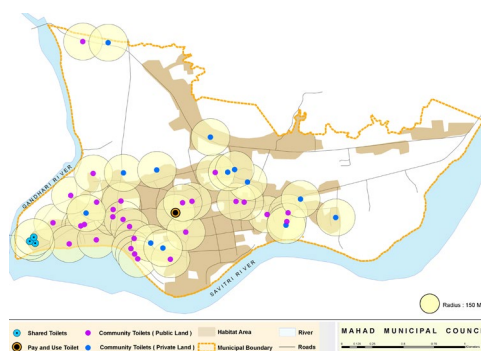
FORMAT FOR LIST OF TOILETS (MAHAD)								
Sl. No.	Area / Place	No. of Block	No. of Seats			Type of Land (Public/private)	Type of Toilet (Community / Shared / PAT & Use/other)	Remark
			Male	Female	Animal			
1	खंदरनाका	3				Govt. Land	Share Toilet	6 Seats
2	हापुसलाने मठणीय जवडे	1	3	3	-	Govt. Land	Public	
3	कोटवडी	2	3	3	-	Mun. Land	Public	
4	काजपुरी नवशि जवडे	3	4	4	-	Govt. Land	Public	
5	खारवडी जवडे	1	2	2	3	Mun. Land	Public	

Strengthening the Network of Community Toilets

The previous investments in creating a network of community toilets have stood in good stead for the Council. This was used as a basis for identifying gaps. In this, toilets that were in a relatively good condition were repaired and upgraded, but those in a completely dilapidated condition were demolished making way for new and larger community blocks. Once again, the same strategy as in the past – requesting the private land owners to grant them permission to upgrade/repair/build on their lands under an informal verbal arrangement – was followed. Except for only one case that remains mired in dispute, none of the other landowners objected to the continuation of the same agreement. Indeed, this emerges as a unique feature of the ODF exercise and appears to have played a decisive role in creating the required toilet infrastructure. It is also indicative of the community spirit that seems to have been generated and maintained in the city. This was possible as residents felt part of the larger initiative and willingly contributed (in kind) to the same. In some cases, the communities also made a request via their local councilors for repair or total reconstruction. This entire exercise was self-financed by the MMC. Over the past three years, MMC has spent 20 lakh rupees from its own municipal budget resources. As a result of these initiatives, an extensive and functional network was created in the city.

Spatial distribution of community toilets: Based on its feedback from the community, MMC has managed to develop a very good spatial distribution of its community toilets. Figure 2 illustrates this well. The community toilets are located all through the inhabited area reaching to a large population segment without access to individual toilets. Considering a buffer of 150 m (or a walking time of 2 minutes), the influence area of community toilets

Figure 2: Location and influence area of community toilets in Mahad



extends to more than 66 percent of the inhabited area of the city.

Shared Toilets:

MMC has also considered the cases where community toilets were not accepted by the users. At three such locations, MMC has provided one toilet seat per two households (refer Figure 2). Access to these toilets is controlled by those two households and their maintenance is also taken care by the users.

Provision for Women Users in Community Toilets:

Mahad has 59 community toilet blocks with provision for both male and female users. These 59 blocks have a total of 297 seats, out of which 150 seats are for female users and 147 seats for male users. There are no major exclusive blocks for female users. However, there are separate entries for both females and males in these blocks. Similarly, an extensive survey of community toilets vis-à-vis their availability and present condition was undertaken. The survey included detailed information on – location; total number of blocks; number of seats available (both male and female); land ownership pattern (government, municipal council, private); and type of toilet. As per the categories outlined by the MMC, an inventory of community (public), shared and pay and use toilets in the city was made. A qualitative assessment of their physical condition was also done.

A public toilet with separate entries for male and female users. The city has similar arrangement for all its community toilets



Regular Operation and Maintenance of Community Toilets

Regular cleaning as well as intermittent repairs were carried out by MMC from its own funds, without levying any charges on the users. Five 'safai karmacharis' were allocated specific prabhags (zones) for daily cleaning. They covered the same within a specified time (6 to 10 am) and entered the completion of tasks in a muster book. This was supervised intermittently and not on a day to day basis. A 'Mukkadam' (Supervisor) supervised the status of community toilets from time to time. In case of persistent complaints from the community, the Sanitary Inspector visited the site to oversee the cleaning operations. Thus, a simple framework guided the overall operation and maintenance (O&M), allowing a flexible and manageable system to emerge. Within it, whenever conspicuous gaps were noticed, they were acted upon quickly, as routine tasks went on.

Specific complaints by users were attended to within a reasonable time frame. Although there was a 'muster' kept in the Council office for formal registration of complaints, this was not the preferred system by the users. For instance, complainants visited the Council office or telephonically registered recurrent problems (such as dirty/overflowing toilets, damaged doors). Sometimes local councilors attending the Council for some other tasks communicated the problem to the concerned officer. The Council, on its part, took "not more than two to

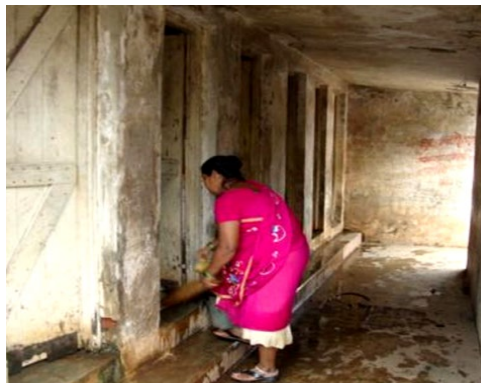
three days to respond", as recounted by the Council Official. Thus, the overall framework for O&M was personalised and interactive.

The Health Department of MMC has one Head of Department (HoD), one Assistant, one Supervisor and forty seven Safai Kamgaars (which includes the permanent and temporary staff). Out of the forty seven, five are engaged in the daily cleaning of the community toilets.

One of the 59 community toilets blocks in Mahad Toilets



The community toilets are regularly cleaned and well kept



The city is divided into five 'prabhags', each allocated to one Safai Kamgaar for daily cleaning in the morning. Thus the number of seats per staff ratio is about 60. Regular O&M of community toilets was confirmed during the validation exercise by the PAS team. It was observed that community blocks were in a reasonably good and functional condition in almost all the locations (refer photos on next pages). Indeed, regular operation and maintenance of the toilet infrastructure emerges as an important contributing factor to the ODF status of Mahad.

Efforts Continue - “Hagindari Mukta Yojana”

Following the toilet survey, under the directives of Government of Maharashtra, a formal “Hagindari Mukta Yojana” (ODF Project) was publically initiated by the MMC in 2008. This directive was issued under the ‘Sant Gadge Baba Nagari Swachhata Abhiyan (SGBA)” by the Department of Water Supply and Sanitation, Government of Maharashtra. Following a meeting with the Jilla Adhikari, Raigad district, a plan of action was outlined by the MMC. A zone-wise inventory of the open defecation status of the city was made by appointing

easy access to a community toilet within walking distance of less than 150 m.

The Health Department of MMC continued to identify individuals still found defecating in the open and made their names public (Figure 3). In a city of a few thousand households, this ‘personalisation’ of an undesired activity created public shame and became successful in curbing it. As a parallel activity, it was also proposed to fine the landowners on whose land this practice was found to be prevalent. This proved to a deterrent as landowners started supervising their plots more closely.

Easy access to community toilets has helped in eliminating open defecation in Mahad

Table 4: Inventory of public toilets



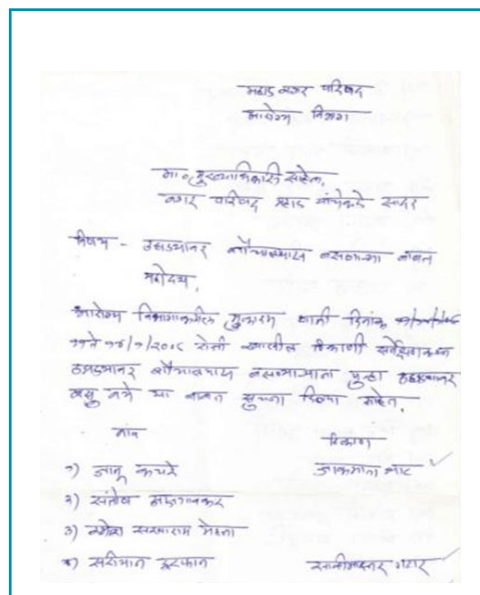
उपनगर पंचायत महाराष्ट्र शासन, रायगड जिल्हा									
उपनगर पंचायत महाराष्ट्र शासन, महाराष्ट्र शासन									
क्र.सं.	उपनगर क्षेत्र	वेळ	उपनगर क्षेत्रात असलेल्या	संख्या	उपनगर क्षेत्रात	संख्या	उपनगर क्षेत्रात	संख्या	उपनगर क्षेत्रात
१.	२.	३.	४.	५.	६.	७.	८.	९.	१०.
१	प्रधान कार्यालय	१५/१५	०	०	०	०	०	०	०
२	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
३	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
४	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
५	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
६	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
७	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
८	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
९	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१०	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
११	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१२	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१३	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१४	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१५	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१६	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१७	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१८	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
१९	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१
२०	महाराष्ट्र शासन	१५/१५	१	१	१	१	१	१	१

four municipal staff (Mukkadams). An in-depth exercise, it contained details such as – name of the ‘prabhag’ (zone), total number of inhabitants in that zone; open defecation spots in the same; total number of individuals resorting to open defecation; percentage to total population; total number of community toilets; and finally total number of seats (Table 4).

Figure 3: Letter to the President MMC in 2008 with a list indicating persons found defecating in open

Present Situation

The present situation vis-à-vis the toilet coverage, both individual and community, is very good. The coverage of households with either individual or community toilets is very good. Evidently, the dedicated efforts by MMC after the ‘Toilet Survey’ of 2007 towards strengthening the physical infrastructure, has had a high impact. Data validation by the PAS team shows that all households in Mahad have access to either their own individual toilets (85 percent) or have an



Future Plans and Sustainability of ODF Initiative

Mahad has demonstrated a proactive approach towards achieving the 'Open Defecation Free' status. What started as a campaign two decades ago, has led to deeper behavioral changes as the city continues to maintain a near total absence of open defecation. Even after the departure of Mr. S.S. Sawant in 2006, the key initiator of the ODF campaign, subsequent Presidents have maintained its momentum. The future plans of MMC are indicative of this. The MMC too has retained its focus on this objective as demonstrated by a number of initiatives that are either proposed or under implementation.

Provision of individual and shared toilets

Under the Maharashtra Sujal Nirmal Abhiyan's 'Maharashtra Suvarna Mohotsavi Nagari Dalit Basti Pani Puravtha va Swacchata Yojna' MMC has completed a detailed survey of infrastructure availability in the Dalit community of the city. With the Mega-Mission's objective of 'development and upgradation of infrastructure in water supply, sewerage and urban sanitation sector', individual toilets for this target group will be provided. The cost of an individual is pegged at Rs. 12,000, of which 80 percent is the grant under the scheme, and 20 percent is the beneficiary contribution. However, the beneficiary contribution will be borne by MMC from its own funds (Resolution dated 2/2/2012). This will make the individual toilets fully subsidised for the poor beneficiaries. This, in addition to the existing infrastructure, will further strengthen the Council's goal of making the city ODF.

Under the same scheme, areas where individual toilets are difficult due to space constraints, shared toilets would be constructed on land made available by MMC (Resolution dated 2/2/2012). In

such toilets, both water and electricity connections are proposed.

Sub-contracting maintenance of community toilet infrastructure

Under a yearly contract, maintenance of community toilets is being given to a local private contractor. For this, an exhaustive list of items has been drawn. This includes - specifications for water closets; connections to drainage; fixing door shutters and frames of different thickness and paneling; panelled window shutters with specific thickness and fittings; specifications for masonry, plastering, painting and waterproofing; tiling; and grill work for windows and ventilators. Further, the contract also details out the type, diameter and necessary fittings (bends, tees, single/double junction joints) for wastewater pipes along with details of excavation, laying and refilling of trenches. Each item outlines a corresponding fixed rate. Thus, this will lead to regular maintenance of community toilets.

Pay and use community toilets

MMC received a total grant of Rs. 1,41,00,000 from the 'Nagar Parishad Prashasan Sanchanalaya' (City Manager's Association, Directorate of Municipal Administration) for special projects ('Vaishishtya Purna Yojana') for the period between 2005-06 to 2010-11. Under this grant, a 'Pay and Use' model for community toilet has been sanctioned at the total cost of Rs. 34,58,741. This community block adopts a number of innovative design features. For instance, it is a large toilet block containing separate male and female toilets, baths and a caretaker room. This community toilet is proposed on the peripheral boundary of a girl's school at a busy market area on land owned by the Council. Owing to its location, it is designed in a manner so as to clearly

Infrastructure provision and effective maintenance policy - tools to retain ODF status of Mahad

demarcate areas of usage for the school and the general public, each with separate entrances. The portion for common use is patterned on the 'pay and use' model. Within this arrangement, requirements of both the user groups – the students of the school, as well as the general public in the market area – will be met.

Construction of two storey community toilet block

The Council proposes to demolish two community toilet blocks that are in a dilapidated condition. In their place, the new model proposed is a double storey block with eleven seats - six for male users and five for female users. This double storey community toilet block has been proposed as a response to space constraints on the existing locations. Both are to be constructed from the Council's own funds.

Introduction of sanitation charges in municipal bye – laws

MMC has proposed to include sanitation charges as part of property tax. A resolution to this effect has been passed in the Municipal Bye Laws. The exact amount to be charged is currently under discussion.

Thus, the two-pronged approach of the Council is being continued in its future plans too: both for assessing needs and creating the required infrastructure as well as properly maintaining the existing facilities. Discussions with the Council President also revealed that the focus is increasingly towards construction of individual toilets with adequate on site disposal via septic tanks. Similarly, levying user charges via 'Pay and Use' community blocks and introduction of sanitation charges in the property tax, indicates a movement from fully subsidised infrastructure and service towards a more financially viable one. Further, the Council's efforts towards introducing innovative design features are noteworthy.

Figure 4: Timeline of key milestones



Conclusion

The story of Mahad shows the efforts of a small ULB to achieve the status of an ODF city. A number of factors have contributed to this.

Leadership

The central role played by a visionary leadership is evident in all the efforts undertaken by the MMC. The first impetus towards making Mahad ODF came from the President of the MMC almost two decades ago. This laid the foundation for a sustained drive against open defecation. The long leadership provided by this President (1985–96 and then 2001–06) gave momentum to this campaign and maintained its focus. As recalled by the Council President, officials as well as several councillors, his towering personality created a culture of pro-action and responsiveness which, over time, got deeply embedded into the manner of conducting civic affairs. Even succeeding Presidents demonstrated a strong commitment towards this goal, as evident in the Toilet Survey of 2007 followed by systematic efforts undertaken for the 'Open Defecation Free Project' in 2008.

As recalled by the present President of the MMC, "The long and sustained efforts by one individual have created an environment where similar conduct is expected of us. Although he has departed, we are still guided by the precedents laid by him." Indeed, the catalytic role played by the leadership of the MMC emerges as one of the key ingredients in making Mahad an ODF city.

Social pressure

A combined strategy of publicly exposing and penalising offenders and, in some cases, even levying fines was highly effective. It created indirect social pressure and gradually brought about a deeper behavioural change in the

residents such that this practice became unacceptable. In a small, personalised setting of a town, this unwanted publicity and the attached shame was one of the biggest deterrents. In many other instances, especially in rural areas, this strategy has been used with high impact as part of a larger information, education and communication (IEC) initiative that has included well planned efforts at using folk dances, traditional theatre, children's rallies, door to door campaigns, etc. In Mahad's case, IEC in the formal sense of the word was not used, and was probably not needed given the urban setting. However, what is evident is a strong focus and relentless efforts to achieve goals. Guided by a proactive leader, the willing participation of the Council staff as well as town residents is notable.

Ensuring adequate physical toilet infrastructure

A gradual behavioural change was supported by creating adequate physical infrastructure of toilets – both individual and community. The Toilet Survey of 2007 that documented existing conditions and identified gaps was followed by construction of new community toilet blocks and repair of those in a decrepit state. The future proposals of the MMC are also geared towards augmenting as well as maintaining this infrastructure. Thus, both the quantity as well as the quality of toilet infrastructure and linked services were never undervalued by the MMC.

Innovative arrangements to involve private landowners

In the MMC's case, one of the most unusual arrangements is that of private landowners surrendering part of their lands for construction of community toilets. The complex issue of land availability, ownership and acquisition was circumvented due to this unique

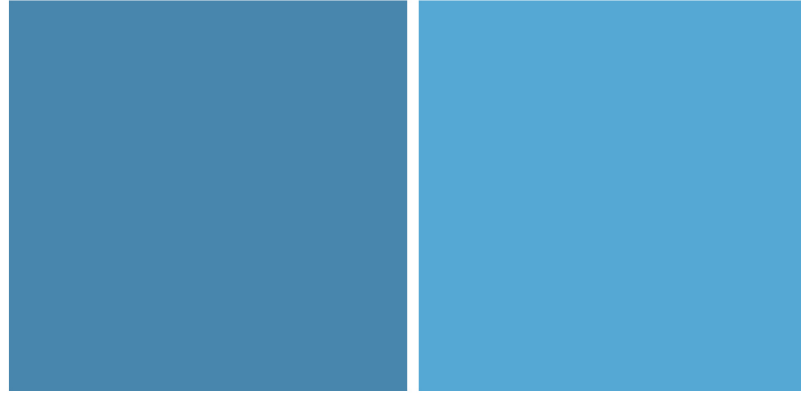
ODF status of Mahad achieved through proactive and sustained

arrangement. A sense of inclusiveness and participation is demonstrated by this agreement wherein the residents willingly contributed towards a larger collective effort by the Council.

Continued focus on O&M

The O&M of the physical infrastructure thus created has been given sufficient attention by the MMC. This has assured continued usage by the community, thereby also deterring open defecation. Future proposals stress on sustainability of the created infrastructure via sub-contracting the maintenance of community toilets as well as levying user fees.

Thus, in this journey of Mahad towards achieving ODF status, the proactive and sustained efforts by the MMC to bring about deeper behavioural changes supported by well functioning toilet infrastructure emerge as the key ingredients.



The Performance Assessment System (PAS) Project

The 'Performance Assessment System – PAS' is a five-year action research project, initiated by the CEPT University, Ahmedabad, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It supports development of appropriate tools and methods to measure, monitor and improve delivery of urban water and sanitation services in the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The PAS Project comprises three components of performance measurement, monitoring and improvement.

The PAS Project is supporting the development of City Sanitation Plans (CSP) to achieve open defecation free status for four small cities in Maharashtra, which are Wai, Hingoli, Ambajogai and Sinnar. These cities were selected by the Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Government of Maharashtra, and Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran (MJP). A framework for city-wide assessment using the full value chain for urban sanitation has been developed, which is being used in developing these CSPs. Initial workshops were organised by the MJP with officials of these cities to discuss the CSP approach. Draft plans for these cities are ready and will be discussed with city officials.