



# Role of SHGs, Communities and ULB for setting up Hand Washing (HW) facilities in Sinnar

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Provision of public infrastructure is not only a matter of capital investment, but it also requires multi-stakeholder engagement to keep it operational and for its sustained usage. This has been demonstrated in the city of Sinnar in Maharashtra, where Sinnar Municipal Council (SMC) with support of Center for Water and Sanitation (CWAS), CRDF, CEPT University have provided pedal operated handwashing (HW) facilities at 22 different locations in the city. These HW stations were funded by Arghyam. For these facilities, SMC has taken the primary responsibility for its regular operation and maintenance, whereas Self-help groups (SHGs) and communities have been involved at the various level of decision making and monitoring of the facilities. Some of the key roles played by these different stakeholders for successful implementation of these facilities are as follows:

### Sinnar Municipal Council

SMC has been at the pivotal role of planning and implementation of the HW facilities in Sinnar. The sanitation department at SMC with support of CWAS team identified the critical locations in the city where the HW facilities could be provided. These locations were further reviewed and approved by the Chief Officer (head of executive wing) and the President (head of elected wing) of SMC. Once the facilities were installed, SMC has taken the primary responsibility of its regular operation and maintenance which includes replenishing the liquid soap, supplying water and undertaking repairs, if any at these HW facilities. SMC has also ensured that there is adequate water availability at all the locations; either through provision of an individual water connection or by deploying its water taker daily to replenish the overhead water tank. SMC, through its SHG groups under NULM also identified SHG members who could monitor these facilities regularly and have provided them with monitoring formats on which the SHGs record their observation and report to SMC. Regular meetings of these members are conducted by SMC to understand the issues and for resolving them. The council, at its own cost, has also setup awareness banners for showcasing proper practice of handwashing at all the facilities.

**“Since the outbreak of Covid-19, the Sinnar Municipal Council has been making continuous efforts to control its spread, especially in the slums. CWAS have been a great support to us by helping us provide HW facilities at the most critical locations of Sinnar through funding from Arghyam. We shall do our best to keep these facilities functional”**

**- Chief Officer, Sinnar Municipal Council**



## Self-help groups

The SHGs play a key role in terms of keeping these HW stations operational by monitoring them daily and reporting to the council if there are any concerns. These members stay near these facilities and were identified by the presidents of their SHG groups. Some of key activities that these SHG members perform daily are as follows:

- They visit the facility at-least twice a day – in the morning and evening to check on availability of water and soap. They also check whether the facility is functioning properly and if there are any instances of vandalism. Based on this they inform the respective authority at SMC.
- They maintain a record of their observations in the format provided by the SMC and submit their monitoring report once every week to SMC.
- They also attend the fortnightly meetings organised by SMC to discuss on points related to handwashing facilities.
- They create awareness about handwashing practices through one-on-one discussions and by sharing the posters showcasing proper practice of handwashing through WhatsApp within their SHG groups and other circles.

**“The NULM department at SMC suggested us to undertake the task of monitoring the HW facilities in our locality. Since I like to work for the betterment of society, I readily agreed to undertake this task. My grocery shop is just in front of the HW facility. Thus, apart from visiting it twice a day, I can keep a watch at it for the whole day while working at the shop.”**

**- Shobha Yekhande, President, Mahalxmi SHG**

## Community members

Community members have been one of the key contributors to the designing and monitoring of these HW facilities. CWAS-SMC team had first piloted a HW facility at one of the identified locations to understand the feasibility of design. Once the pilot model was setup, feedback related to its design and functioning was taken from its users, nearby residents and SHG groups. According to the feedback, modifications were incorporated in the design of further installations. Community members using the HW facilities have also taken the onus of safeguarding the facility and ensure that it is functioning properly. They inform the SHG members if water or soap dispenser is empty. At

**“The handwashing facility is helping us to maintain the required hygiene during this pandemic. Thus, we feel that safeguarding this HW facility is also our responsibility. We inform the SHG member if the soap or water is unavailable and also ask other users not to vandalise this facility and use it appropriately”**

**- Community member at HW facility**

locations where SMC has provided water connections, the community members have taken the responsibility of turning the tap off when the HW overhead tank is filled up. Some of the community members have also educated the other users to not vandalise the facility and use it appropriately.



### Scale-up

The project has demonstrated that funders/donors working with government can bring effective improvement in provision of services and engagement with SHG members and communities from design to implementation stage can bring a lot of ownership from these stakeholders. This model of engagement could be scaled up and replicated in other cities of the Maharashtra as well as in the country. As per the estimates by CWAS, to cover entire urban Maharashtra ( 395 cities) a capital funding of around INR 25 Crore is required of which INR 10 Cr is required to cover the 368 small and medium towns (Municipal councils) and INR 15 Cr is required for 27 large cities ( Municipal corporation).



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