

SLUM NETWORKING PROJECT (SNP) AHMEDABAD MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

Efforts for providing basic services in slum settlements have been ongoing in India, Gujarat and in Ahmedabad. However, the approach of providing a few of the priority services in parts or some of the slums neither changed the quality of life of the slum dwellers nor did it change the environmental conditions of the area. In 1995, AMC initiated Slum Networking Project through a unique partnership between Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation and NGOs. The objective of the Slum Networking Project was to transform the urban environment with the approach to provide basic infrastructure services at the household and slum level in an affordable and sustainable way.

This initiative was very successful and AMC received **The Dubai International Award for, in 2005, Best Practice to improve the living Environment.**

SITUATION BEFORE THE INITIATIVE

Most of the slum population of Ahmedabad lived in conditions that included total or partial absence of critical infrastructure like water supply, drainage, roads, toilets and street lighting, Over populated and congested, temporary structures with inadequate maintenance, the lack of basic minimum education, insufficient skills, low incomes, poor standard of living mark this population. Of the 710 slums, 190 slums comprising of 47,300 families were living with absolutely abysmal facilities.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

SNP in Ahmedabad has therefore been designed to provide a package of infrastructure services in consultation with communities/ CBOs, NGO and the private sector. From its inception, SNP was designed to ensure that NGO partners directly provided or enabled access of communities to health and education services. The partnerships with the private sector have not grown substantially while AMC's partnership with NGOs for implementation of SNP has evolved substantially since the implementation of a pilot project in Sanjay Nagar in 1996-97. The establishment of a Resident's Association for release of community contributions from the Banks to AMC at different stages of completion of infrastructure works and for managing the operation and maintenance in each settlement has also resulted in capacity enhancement of the slum residents.

The financial arrangements evolved for safeguarding financial contributions of individual households through deposits in individual accounts till such time that transfers have to be made to AMC, have also contributed significantly to reducing perceived risks by communities. Not only has that, the exposure and opportunities for managing savings and consequent access to loans also empowered the communities and individual households. AMC's partnerships with NGOs for implementation of SNP have evolved such that NGOs are planning, designing and implementing infrastructure works in slums. AMC's role has evolved further to checking of design, supervision of implementation and overall monitoring the progress of work. As of December 2005, SNP has been undertaken in 41 slum communities covering 8703 households benefiting 43,515 people. Out of which infrastructure work has been completed in 32 slum communities and work ongoing in 9 slum communities.

This change in implementation process over the years shows AMC's conviction in the partnering approach and need for slum residents to demonstrate willingness to get individual connections for availing water supply and sanitation services. AMC has made adequate provision in its annual budgets for SNP and has also availed funds under Government of India's National Slum Development Program (NSDP), and financial support of HUDCO.

The city corporation has adequate technical capacity to provide technical support to the project. A SNP cell was constituted of technical personnel to implement the project professionally. The Community was mobilised through NGOs to take part in the project.

In order to have transparent processes, the following procedures were included:

- **Monthly Monitoring Meeting:** AMC as well as the NGO partners hold monthly meetings to review the progress of the work. The meetings provide a forum for all partners, including the community to share their views and facilitate the implementation of the program.
- **Joint Planning:** The layout plans of the design though prepared by AMC are shared with the partners, and necessary amendments made.
- **Trainings:** The AMC engineers jointly conduct trainings with MHT, to orient the community on the technical aspects to ensure community consent and support for smooth program implementation.
- **Interaction with Public:** The post lunch office hours of the AMC officials are allocated for open interaction with community and partners.

RESULT AND IMPACTS

The SNP program as on November 2006, has reached 8,703 families, making a significant contribution in the lives of 43,515 people in 41 slum communities of Ahmedabad. SNP program of Ahmedabad city is an example of strong and substantial partnership among various stakeholders of the civil society who engaged themselves in providing better physical quality of life to its poor fellow citizens. It is also an excellent example of how, when a government body is willing to enter into strong and meaningful partnerships, many elements of good governance such as equity, transparency and accountability.



Ahmedabad Municipal

ULB PROFILE

POPULATION (2001 CENSUS)	35,20,085
POPULATION (PROJECTIONS -2009)	56,06,728
NO. OF ZONES	6
CLASS OF ULB	Municipal Corporation

