Despite putting in efforts to achieve complete sanitation, some Gram Panchayats (GPs) are unable to reach this target. Karlam GP in Vizianagaram District presents one such situation. Taking a close look at the efforts in Karlam may be crucial to identifying hurdles.

Karlam GP is adopted by Hon’ble Minister for Sanitation Smt. Kimidi. Mrunalini. After which the GP was able to improve on its Primary Health Care centre, roads, Water Tank etc… Achieving complete sanitation is the current goal of this GP and local teams along with the District and Mandal level official are putting in following efforts to achieve the goals.

**Efforts by Officials:**

- **Step-1**
  A brief awareness building exercise was taken up by door to door visits to all the houses.

- **Step-2**
  When not a lot of people came forward for construction of toilets, water supply was stopped for 2 days.

- **Step-3**
  Other Govt. benefits such as ration, Pensions and were delayed

This pressure led citizens to initiate construction of toilets. Currently, out of estimated 507 to be constructed toilets, 296 toilets have been constructed, 107 are under construction and the remaining are faced with challenges yet to be addressed.
Here it can be clearly observed that there were no planned motivation or awareness building activities to generate demand for toilets from the community.

Challenges:

1. **Issue**: Most families have constructed septic tanks instead of leech pits which are more expensive than the latter. This increased cost of construction and added to the financial burden.

   **Possible solution**: Presenting a cost-benefit analysis of both the systems to citizens to ensure they take an informed decision.

2. **Issue**: Many citizens have reported lack of water despite presence of a water tank that has capacity to provide water to the entire Gram Panchayat.

   **Possible solution**: It has to be recognised that water availability is different from water accessibility. Ensuring equal accessibility of water throughout the village will help to sustain toilet usage.

“*I built a toilet in 2003 itself and used it till 2005. But due to water scarcity, we have been defecating in open. Without providing sufficient water achieving 100% utilisation may not be possible*” says Suresh a resident of the village.

**Current situation of the GP:**

Karlam is a large Gram Panchayat with 1063 households living in different conditions. For eg.

- Some roads are really narrow and houses very small, in such places the construction of toilets may not be easily possible. For such houses the GP team has identified two spaces to take up construction of community toilets.
- There are few other households which have constructed toilets, but not yet utilizing them.
- A dump yard is being planned in the village; however there is no set system for collecting and disposing waste generated within the GP.

**Community Pit in Karlam- Innovation**

For 10 households that did not have space for even single pits, the GP is constructing a network of pipeline that can carry waste from those ten toilets to one pit. Like Community toilets, this is a community septic tank.

*Many Large Gram Panchayats such as Karlam require sound planning coupled with high focus on awareness in the absence of which both achieving sanitation and maintaining it will be difficult. Efforts that are being employed in Karlam might be successful if directed by a plan.*