

## PARTNERSHIP TO SCALE UP INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR URBAN SANITATION IN BIHAR

### SANITATION CHALLENGES AND KEY NATIONAL PROGRAMMES

In response to the challenges of inclusive sanitation services in Indian towns and cities the Central and State Governments have taken several policy actions. The civil society organisations (CSOs) and private sector have complemented these efforts. Notwithstanding significant gains in improving coverage, accessibility, and quality of sanitation services, a lot needs to be done to realise the dream of “Swachh Bharat” by the time India celebrates the 150<sup>th</sup> Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in October 2019.

In continuation with the legacy set by the Integrated Low Cost Sanitation (ILCS) programme launched in 1980s, the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Scheme (JNNURM) was launched in 2005. It was conceptualised as an integrated and holistic approach to addressing urban issues with a focus on governance reforms. It aimed to strengthen urban infrastructures and provide basic services by increasing investment in water and sanitation infrastructures. The JNNURM had four sub-missions: (i) Urban Infrastructure and Governance (UIG) administered by the Ministry of Urban Development, with a focus on infrastructural development covering 63 Mission cities (ii) Urban Infrastructure Development of Small and Medium Towns (UIDSSMT) administered by the Ministry of Urban Development, aimed at urban infrastructural improvement in towns and cities except the Mission cities covered under UIG and BSUP (iii) Basic Services to the Urban Poor (BSUP) administered by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation with a focus on integrated development of slums covering the Mission cities as UIG, and (iv) Integrated Housing and Slum Development Programme (IHSDP) administered by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, aimed at holistic slum development, applicable to towns and cities except Mission cities covered under UIG and BSUP. These programmes gave an impetus to improving sanitation services in Indian towns and cities. The National Urban Sanitation Policy (NUSP), released in 2008, was the first specific policy which addressed urban sanitation and recommended preparation of state specific sanitation strategies and city sanitation plans on the lines of the national policy.

The launch of Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban (SBM-U) in 2014 ushered a tectonic shift in urban sanitation. It departed from the past strategies in several ways: first, it targeted all 4,041 Statutory Towns; second, it promised to provide subsidies to the construction of individual household latrines (IHL). The objectives of the Mission included: (i) Elimination of open defecation; (ii) Eradication of manual scavenging; (iii) Modern and scientific Municipal Solid Waste Management; (iv) To effect behavioural change regarding healthy sanitation practices; (v) Generate awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health; and (vi) Capacity augmentation for ULBs to create an enabling environment for private sector participation.

SBM-U has targets to provide 66.42 lakh IHLs, 2.52 lakh community toilets, 2.56 lakh public toilets across urban India. Till April 2018, 46.36 lakh IHLs and 3.6 lakh public and community toilets have been constructed. A total of 2,043 ULBs have been declared ODF. 61,846 wards in the country now practice 100% door to door collection of solid waste<sup>1</sup>.

Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) was launched in 2015 covering 500 cities across the country with over one lakh population. The components of the AMRUT consist of capacity building, reform implementation, water supply, sewerage and septage management, storm water drainage, urban transport and development of green spaces and parks. Cities under AMRUT have also been encouraged to set up Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) under the component of sewerage facility and septage management. Currently, 47% (Census 2011) of the urban households depends on onsite sanitation system, which is expected to increase with the construction of toilets under SBM-U. To address this gap, National Policy on Faecal Sludge and Septage Management was launched in February 2017. The policy aims to provide and strengthen safe faecal sludge treatment and septage management. SBM, AMRUT and FSSP together seek to provide a sustainable sanitation services to the urban population.

<sup>1</sup> According to SBM-U dashboard (<http://swachhbharaturban.gov.in/dashboard/>) as on April, 2018

## RATIONALE FOR THE CONFERENCE

Despite significant political support and visibility, a number of systemic gaps exist in the implementation of sanitation programmes. One such concern is the gap between access to and usage of toilets where construction of toilets (IHHL and public and community toilets) have outpaced behaviour change. There have been concerns with context specificity of technology, quality of constructions, and sustainability of the movement. The ULBs at times adhered to a mechanical approach to target completions and did not pay much attention to behaviour change efforts. Concerns have also been raised about the deviation from norms essential to facilitate and sustain community participation.

The capacity of ULBs and other city authorities to implement and sustain sanitation movement with such a scale and pace is still limited. A systemic policy and concerted effort to develop institutional and individual capacity has been missing. The demand for capacity building is limited, sporadic and event based; supply lacks systematic planning, resource allocation, execution, and a policy and strategy at the city, state and national levels. Lack of credible supply side institutions that provide capacity building support is also a critical issue. This is particularly acute in certain regions and in certain areas of specialisation.

Apart from the governments, a number of civil society organisations, international donors, corporate social responsibility programmes, private sectors, and academic institutions have joined the effort towards finding comprehensive and sustainable solution of India's urban sanitation problems. However, more often than not, many such actors work in isolation missing out possible synergy in approach, target, and results. A comprehensive framework for partnership based on complementarities

and inherent strengths of each actor can address many unresolved challenges.

Over the decades and more so in the recent years, plethora of innovations have been tried out by governmental, non-governmental and private sector actors and institutions. These relate to technology, institution, financing, and community based solutions. Nevertheless, innovations can be of limited use and even be wasted, if these cannot be scaled up and made accessible to a large number of communities. Many such innovations could not travel because of limited efforts to dissemination, financing, and institutionalisation. A comprehensive, yet flexible framework is required to scale up innovations for better sanitation services.

The partnership, innovation, and capacity are intrinsically linked to ensuring inclusive sanitation services. The conference will bring together policy makers, researchers, and practitioners across governments, ULBs, parastatals, CSOs, academia, media, CSR, and communities to gain insights on how a partnership approach can scale up innovations and capacity development.

The conference will specifically address the challenges and solutions to achieve ODF and moving towards ODF ++. It will deliberate upon institutionalising scientific methods of solid waste management. The use of service level benchmark and appropriate financing are critical issues which the conference will discuss. It will also underline how a well-designed citizen engagement strategy can help both achieving ODF ++ and clean cities through better solid waste management.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE

- Showcasing scalable innovative solutions from across the state and country to address the challenges of inclusive urban sanitation services;
- To create a learning and knowledge platform by bringing together policy makers, researchers, experts, and practitioners on inclusive urban sanitation services in the state;
- Informing and influencing policies and institutions to enhance the impact of urban sanitation programmes in the state.

*The Conference is funded through **Engaged Citizens Responsive City** project, implemented by **PRIA** and supported by the **European Union**. It focuses on strengthening civil society of the urban poor to participate in planning and monitoring of sanitation services. The project works across three cities in India (Ajmer in Rajasthan, Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh, and Muzaffarpur in Bihar).*

