

One-Day Rapid Action Learning (RAL) Workshop under Swachh Bharat Mission – Gramin in Barabanki District

Barabanki is a district close to the capital of Uttar Pradesh, India. To support and accelerate the progress of the district in the Swachh Bharat Mission-Gramin (SBM-G) a one-day Rapid Action Learning Workshop was held in the district on 13 June 2018. The workshop was convened by the District Sanitation Committee and facilitated by WSSCC's India Support Unit and the CLTS Knowledge Hub, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK. 12 facilitators were present as observers. The workshop provided an opportunity for those engaged with the SBMG at the block level to come together, learn from each other, and plan action.

This report describes the process followed in the workshop, together with the main topics covered. These included bottle-necks, solutions to those bottle-necks, learnings from each other, other ideas for actions, and then action plans drawn up by each block on the basis of what they had learnt in the workshop.

Participants majorly comprised government officials of district and block level. Along with District Magistrate and Chief Development Officer, other district level and divisional level officials were also present, viz., Additional District Magistrate, District Panchayat Raj Officer (DPRO), District Development Officer (DDO), Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer, Deputy Director (Agriculture), Deputy Commissioner (MGNREGA). District Consultant and two Zilla Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP), Block Development Officer (BDOs), Additional Development Officers (ADO - Panchayat), Block Coordinators, Gram Panchayat Officer, Village Development Office contributed from blocks. There were around 60 participants from different blocks, of whom only 5 were women.

Objective:

- To understand the bottle-necks and challenges faced at different levels presented by the blocks,
- To brainstorm and share solutions
- To share innovations and good new practices and learn from each other
- To prepare action plans for the coming 3 months.
- To help 12 new RAL facilitators understand the methodology of RAL workshop better.

Overview of Process

The process mainly involved participatory approach with few inputs from facilitators.

- Ice-breaking sessions helped the participants to ease out and gave an idea of the group present.
- After a brainstorming session in block groups, participants shared block-wise in plenary the challenges and bottle-necks they faced.
- The challenges were clustered into eight themes. Participants were again asked to brainstorm solutions to these 8 themes in their respective groups or blocks.
- Solutions were brainstormed and shared in plenary again and listed. The listed solutions were then grouped into three categories: those which could be acted on straight away by the block, those that required district level intervention, and those which required action at the policy level. .
- This was followed by blocks highlighting and sharing the innovations and new practices of their respective blocks with everybody. While sharing other blocks noted innovations and practices they found of interest and wanted to find out more about.

- Blocks then took part in hunting and gathering to obtain details of the innovations they had noted and might implement in their blocks.
- Facilitators then gave their inputs, sharing other actions which blocks might wish to consider.
- Block teams and a district team made actions plans for the next three months and shared it in presence of Chief Development Officer.

Challenges and bottlenecks

These are the challenges and bottle-necks shared in sequence of frequency of mention:

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| • Misconception about size of leach-pit | 11 |
| • Lack of awareness | 10 |
| • Insufficiency of incentive money | 7 |
| • Baseline Survey is incorrect | 7 |
| • No force or penalty for open defecators | 6 |
| • Behaviour Change | 5 |
| • Lack of departmental convergence | 5 |
| • Dependency on Incentive Money | 4 |
| • Insufficient man-power | 4 |
| • Non- co-operation from beneficiary | 3 |
| • Sanitation is not a priority | 3 |
| • Social norms | 3 |
| • Lack of funds | 3 |
| • Demand is for septic tank | 2 |
| • Ineffective Nigrani Samiti | 2 |
| • Illiteracy | 2 |
| • Shortage of staff at block level and district level | 2 |
| • Lack of water | 2 |

The following were mentioned only once

- Gram Panchayats are interested in toilet construction only
- Stakeholders are interested in other schemes
- Change in mindset
- Role v/s limitations of Swachhagrahis
- Conflict and contradiction between behavior change and toilet construction
- Mobility and Accessibility issue
- Super-structure is given more importance
- SBM program is target driven
- Comfort in defecating in open
- People unaware of ill-impacts of open defecation
- Lack of motivation
- Old habits
- Shortage of trained masons
- CLTS facilitators are not getting remuneration on time



Block and district teams busy in group activities

CHALLENGES SUMMARIZED:

Extensive list of challenges and bottle necks were then clubbed and summarize into eight:

- **Awareness and behavior change:** It is difficult to leave age old habits and break social norms related to open defecation.
- **Design of toilet:** It is seen across the blocks that many people prefer septic tank over twin-pit toilets due to misconceptions. Other challenge was to make villagers understand the 1-metre depth of pit is correct and adequate.
- **Incentive money is insufficient:** Blocks considered that the current incentive amount is not sufficient for the construction of good sustainable toilet.
- **No provision of penalty for open defecators:** It was believed that penalties were needed for those who did not construct toilets
- **Convergence of departments:** The village level representatives of various government departments, for instance, Pradhan, Gram Panchayat Secretary, ASHA, Anganwadi worker, Ration Shopkeeper, Primary School Teachers, and ANMs should all be involved in the Mission as ground level motivators.
- **Baseline Survey:** Baseline surveys are faulty and do not include the names of most poverty-stricken families.
- **Shortage of man-power:** At every level there is a shortage of man power. District team has in practice 5 positions of District Consultants, of which only one is filled. Each block has a provision for 3 block-coordinators and is highly understaffed. Trained Masons are also not in sufficient numbers.
- **Ineffective Nigrani Samiti and inactive Swachhagrahis:** Nigrani Samitis and Swachhagrahis have become inactive after a while due to lack of motivation.

SOLUTIONS TO CHALLENGES: These were proposed by participants and categorized into 3 sections. It is worth noting that most of the solutions provided can be implemented at block level.

Block Level Interventions

- Involvement of children & awareness campaigns at school level
- Training of selfless Swachhagrahis
- One to one counselling and more time for behavior change
- Street Plays & Film shows

- Social mapping at Gram Panchayat Level
- Sanitation Meeting (Chaupal) at Gram Panchayat Level with representatives of various government departments like health, education, etc.
- Panchayat Raj representative to be engaged more in SBM(G).
- Involvement of Opinion Maker/elderly
- Dissemination of leach-pit toilet benefits and design
- Toilet construction of least able family to shame rich family
- Motivation to well-off people
- No standardization of toilet
- Village level workshop to be organized at least twice a month

District Level Interventions

- Recruitment of staff at district and block level
- Incentive Money for Nigrani Samiti
- Action to be taken against government officials not working
- Break down of incentive money (instalments for constructions and usage)
- Nigrani Samiti given the responsibility to monitor man-power
- Resources be made available to Swachhagrahis
- Remuneration of Swachhagrahis be increased
- Technological advance at district level

Policy Level Interventions

- Increase incentive money
- Re-survey baseline data
- District Magistrate should have the power to edit the baseline data
- Incentive Money to be revised annually



Participant sharing after a block-wise group activity

GOOD PRACTICES AND INNOVATIONS SHARED WERE:

- Starting a campaign in the entire village with the involvement of women, children, prominent people of village. In the campaign, teachers, Aganwadi workers and ASHA workers helped.
- Follow-up- activities by groups of women, children and elderly.

- Motivating the students of Inter College taking the campaign to various villages all at the same time as students belonged to different villages.
- Using women's groups to motivate community for usage of toilet by linking their pride and self-respect.
- Recognising well performing Pradhans at district level and block level which motivated them to do more.
- Pradhans becoming role-models by constructing toilets and using them.
- Retired pensioners and unemployed youths were given CLTS training and they move to other villages after making their own village ODF.
- Appreciation Letters given to families who built their toilets on their own by block level and district level official.
- By organizing "Gaurav Yatra", neighbouring villages got stimulation.
- Training to Swachhagrahis
- Using technology for monitoring (daily progress meeting at district level using video-conferencing, WhatsApp and Digital Communication)
- Selecting best-five Swachhagrahis from each block to work as intermediaries between block level officials and other Swachhagrahis for better management. This was done in order to resolve the issue of shortage of man-power at block level.

Following practices were shared by facilitators:

- Set up and activate a block level war room.
- Include representatives of every caste, creed, gender, age, influence in Nigrani Samitis. Often Nigrani Samiti is dominated by Pradhan and his/her family and people from upper caste. Its effective to involve Scheduled Caste, Schedules Tribe, Backward class, disabled, women, elderly, children, etc.
- Set an example with schools and Anganwadi and health centres and your offices with good clean toilets which are maintained and cleaned and where appropriate, as in schools, accessible.
- Actively involve school children as ambassadors, and as champions for ODF.
- Use many different triggers. CLTS is one. Others are stunting and Menstrual Hygiene Management and discussing menstruation with men.
- Give priority to those who have special needs and the ones left behind, like disabled, very poor and/or very old.
- Explain the advantages of twin pits and discourage people regarding septic tanks. Develop or obtain IEC material briefing about this. Make sure proper job is done and people understand through such pamphlets. And get into the pit yourself and get hold of twin pit fertilizer and show it to people. Use media to show how this is a fertilizer.
- So much can be done by knowledge and awareness. Encourage making videos using mobile phones and disseminate these.

Block Level Action Plans:

Good Practices and innovations gathered by teams and expressed in their Actions Plans included:

- Giving priority to women, widows, disabled and children.
- Designing a pamphlet or other IEC to explain the benefits twin-pit toilets.
- Involvement of every class, caste, gender and age group in Nigrani Samiti.
- Motivate the inactive Swachhagrahis for follow-up activities.
- Motivate the students of High School and Inter College to motivate community in their respective villages.

- Have more discussions with villagers on diseases, stunting and MHM.
- Activate war rooms for regular monitoring and record-keeping.
- Maintain toilets in school, anganwadi and all government institutions at block and district level.
- Door-to-door awareness campaigns by Swachhagrahis
- People representative will be motivated to adopt villages or hamlets.
- Involve retired pensioners and unemployed educated youths for triggering villages.
- Refresher trainings to Swachhagrahis and recognition to the best ones.
- School triggering

IMMEDIATE PRIORITY ACTION

- **Block level meetings to plan early action to be held later the same week.**
- **IEC material to show merits of Twin Pin Toilet and its design** can be developed and disseminated in some form for e.g., pamphlet. This will help the family in supervising while masons are constructing the twin-pit toilets in their home. Also, a mature pit can be opened to show its sustainability and the fertilizer collected can be used to show it does not have any odour and is totally harmless. During the workshop, the fertilizer was passed around in a bottle and everyone was asked to sniff to experience that there is no smell.
- **Stunting and Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)** is an effective tool which can be used to change the behaviour. More can be learned about this from Vinod Mishra (e-mail: vinod.mishra@wsscc.org)
- **Maintenance of government institutional toilets** is a must to encourage others. All the toilets in government offices at blocks as well district level, schools, Anganwadis, need to be maintained and cleaned on a regular basis.
- **Immediate training on awareness and collective behavior change** to clarify that incentive money is not toilet cost and realization of bad impact of open defecation on health.
- **Sensitization of all Gram Pradhan** is urgent need to trigger on collective behavior change
- **Nigrani Samiti** should have representatives from all the caste present in the village, both genders, and of all age groups. It should also involve all the village level government employees. This mixed group helps encourage everyone in the village and it doesn't create polarization of any sort.
- **Mason training** is a must to have sufficient number of masons for construction as soon as the village decides to change its ways.
- **War rooms** is a good way to monitor at block level and district level on regular basis and maintain a record.
- **Digitalization** is an appreciative work done at district level, which helps in faster information sharing across the districts.

Ways Forward:

The district may have been listed as one of low-performing districts, but nevertheless, there is a silver lining. District Magistrate Uday Bhanu Tripathi showed keen interest in the programme and supported in upscaling. Anjani Kumar Singh, Chief Development Officer, believe behavior change is necessary for sustainability. With this workshop, blocks have shared ideas with each other which will help them in their respective blocks. It was also planned that very soon all the Pradhans should be triggered at the same time to simultaneously bring momentum to the mission.