



Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability

The Success Story of Basthi Vikas Manch, Hyderabad

Foreword

This document seeks to capture the various change processes which have energised the **Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability** in Hyderabad, Telangana.

The document serves as a tool to learn from and utilize as part of their sanitation programs. It also presents evidence and lessons for replicating this model across the country.

Acknowledgements

Contents

<i>Foreword</i>	ii
<i>Summary</i>	1
Policy Reforms and Urban Accountability Mechanisms.....	3
“Right to Water And Sanitation”-A Critical Challenge for the Urban Poor	3
Approaches in Accessing WASH	4
The Birth Basthi Vikas Manch.....	5
The Setting of Basthi Vikas Manch	6
How BVM Works.....	7
Basti Vikas Manch: Goal, Approach, and Strategies	9
Three Active Communities of BVM Phase I	12
Successful Basthi Vikas Manch Interventions	13
“Get Involved”	15
Ambedkar Nagar Basthi.....	16
Impact and Visibility of BVM Interventions.....	17
BVM as an Empowered WATSAN Advocacy Platform.....	19
Scaling pilots at City level and Sustainability of BVS.....	20

Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability

Summary

Rapid urbanisation is a global phenomenon leading to the proliferation and expansion urban services. Indian cities and small towns are facing the enormous challenge of building adequate infrastructure and providing coverage, primarily in the water supply and sanitation sector. The burden of WASH crisis in urban areas is borne by the Slum dwellers. Comparative global studies have shown that an average slum dweller pays more for drinking water than a middle class urbanite (Yang, Hong et al, 2012). And sanitation facilities are often poor, inadequate or non-existent in urban slums.

The urban water supply sector faces chronic shortages in investment and inadequate operation and maintenance which have led to problems such as inadequate coverage, intermittent supply, in-equitable water access, deteriorating infrastructure, and environmental un-sustainability of water.

The water sector has witnessed major policy and institutional reforms during the last two decades. The urban sanitation policy of the Government of India aims to sanitise all the cities in India, especially the urban slums, with interventions integrated with education and awareness creation on hygiene and health. However, this effort has been mostly toilet centric. Varied needs of different bio-physical and socio-cultural settings have not been addressed adequately. The WASH needs of the urban poor have received scant attention with only minimal focus on hygiene promotion, equitable distribution of safe water, and sustainable water resource management.

In 2005, the Jawaharlal Nehru national Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) was launched by the Government of India (GoI) with a mission to create reforms and focus on the efficiency in urban infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms through community participation, and accountability of ULBs.

Since the onset of national reforms to enable local urban governance, urban local governments across India, regardless of political affiliation, have at least nominally adopted the language of accountability and participation.

The emphasis on decentralization has taken place concurrently with rapid urban population growth in India. However, many local government agencies have successfully shifted their new responsibilities to civil society groups, without changing the status quo in service delivery to marginalized groups (Rout 2014).

Providing basic amenities like sanitation, safe water supply at affordable rates remains a huge challenge in the coming years as the urban population is constantly growing. Rapidly growing metropolises such as Hyderabad has nearly

doubled its population in the last two decades to over a 10 million in 2016, with about a third of these living in slums.

The lessons from citizen initiatives such as the Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability are valuable for meeting the real challenges of providing quality WASH and other civic amenities to all the citizens who contribute to making Hyderabad a globally competitive city.

Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability was launched in 2011 with a vision to transform the existing distribution of power. The objective of the campaign, financially supported by Water Aid, was to support the communities, particularly the disadvantaged and the marginalised, in identifying their problems first. These communities become capable of understanding their rights, especially their water and sanitation rights, through sustained capacity building inputs. Then they participate in negotiations with other stakeholders to avail these rights.

The project is designed as a collective effort of different NGOs and civil society organisations in Hyderabad for developing a city level citizens' platform. Chetana initially administered the project and led the processes. Later SaciWATERS, with the Society for Participatory Development (SPD) as its implementation partner, took the lead to keep it as a collective led by different organisations in rotation.

In spite of political threats and strong opposition from local leaders, Banjara Basthi has developed as a success story of BVM. The collective strength and resolve of the residents of Banjara Basthi have resolved a number of their problems. BVM of Banjara Basthi has won an International Award for this. All the actors - local politicians, GHMC officials and the leaders of BVM - have been transformed by this experience. The women of the Banjara Basthi pinned down the local MLA to solve their water and sanitation problems.

"We coined the name Basthi Vikas Manch. We also designed the logo when we launched BVS on 11th March 2011. Dr Jasveen Jairath of the Society for Participatory Development inspired and guided us in our efforts." (Monavar Chand, 38, Volunteer since 2009, now a BVM Cluster Coordinator)

Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability

Policy Reforms and Urban Accountability Mechanisms

The government is providing substantial funding to the WASH sector, the overall impact is still low as the approach is highly top-driven. Adequacy and equitable distribution is still a major problem, given the rapid growth of urban centres and slum population.

In 2005, the Jawaharlal Nehru national Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) was launched by the Government of India (GoI) with a mission to create reforms and focus on the efficiency in urban infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms through community participation, and accountability of ULBs. In last decade, 2900 projects relating to water supply, sanitation, storm drainage, slum rehabilitation were taken up. The overall investment under JNNURM has been about Rs. 1.2 lakh crore (Rs.120 billion) in these projects. However, despite these initiatives, the deficit in urban services, especially in the sector of Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) remains high.

The new central government has given high priority to water and sanitation as a basic right of all citizens through the Swachh Bharat Campaign and by providing water and sanitation facilities in every school. After the initial enthusiasm generated by government sponsored campaigns and supported by the national and local, the enthusiasm seems to be waning out. While construction of facilities may be undertaken with funds provided, operation and maintenance of WATSAN infrastructure is a critical issue. Similarly, even after safe water is provided through pipelines at the doorstep or inside house, proper hygiene education and waste management remain challenges.

"Right to Water And Sanitation"-A Critical Challenge for the Urban Poor

The right to water and sanitation is a fundamental human right necessary for the fulfilment of an adequate standard of living and human dignity. This has been affirmed and been recognised in various international treaties and political commitments (Singh and Kumar 2014). While every human being has the right to access water, which is sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable the urban slum dwellers, who are generally disadvantaged with adequate resources (both economically and socially) are deprived this basic rights every day. The burden of adapting to inadequate water and sanitation facilities is eventually borne by this category of population.

The Rights approach is more than just receiving the “entitlements” It allows the people (especially the marginalised and poor) to understand and know their legal rights and entitlements, and empowers them to achieve/claim those rights/entitlements. Thus by engaging people living in poverty, in being part of solutions, enables them to change the equation from being vulnerable to one of obligation and rights. The rights based approach is aimed at facilitating a process whereby the citizen is empowered to hold the State accountable to honour their human rights and legal entitlements. Currently, the provision of WASH services within the country is exclusively hardware-based service delivery approach. As a result the various Non-profit organisations and several CSR activities that are engaged in the drinking water and sanitation sector are substituting the state government as service providers by supplying hardware support. The approach certainly helps in achieving targeted objectives in terms of numbers however; it does not necessarily bring a change in the quality of public health, especially in the case of marginalised people staying in slums and slum-like conditions. There is a need for a paradigm shift in the existing approach to one that is integrated, coordinated, and convergent in action.

Approaches in Accessing WASH

Prior to the policy reforms and several implementation strategies adopted by the Governments in India, Civil society groups have been experimenting with participatory approaches that do not merely see the citizens as “beneficiaries” or end users but as planners and implementers. Studies have shown that people-centred approaches become more accountable and successful (Arcadis 2006, Rout 2014). Such approaches are sturdy and can withstand the pressure of any external social or political crisis like change of government or change of honest officers in the department (Water Aid 2011).

Participatory Approach is the one which encourages the community involvement and appropriate technology which better fits the realities in the field. In participatory processes the solutions result from the inputs of local stakeholders and not solely from ‘conventional wisdom’ or ‘prescriptive’ planning (Atkinson 2007).

The BVM approach can be characterised a rights based approach to urban WATSAN challenges in an urban setting. Both the ‘rights based’ approach and the demand responsive approach are participatory. In the first the community is empowered to demand what is their right, while the latter facilitates participation of the community in planning, design, implementation and operation and maintenance of the systems by the community. In general the rights based approach seems more feasible in urban areas where WASH infrastructure is part of larger systems, while the demand responsive approach seems workable in smaller/rural settings where the systems can be local source based and manageable by a community organisation.

Rights Based Approach to Urban WATSAN

Poor service delivery of basic amenities hits the urban poor the most, who are socially and economically marginalised or excluded (Gupta and Mitra 2002). Poor households continue to struggle to get their entitlements from the government. As such their voice in water and sanitation governance and decision-making is very feeble. The urban poor are directly affected by poor urban planning.

Lack of people's participation, transparency in decision making processes and heavily vested political interests coupled with decades old infrastructure and faulty planning contribute to the chaos in water supply sector. City sewage networks and municipal solid waste management has failed to comply with environmental norms. Untreated drainage gets into the city lakes leading to their gradual deterioration. Increasing groundwater depletion due to unregulated groundwater pumping because of unreliable and inadequate water supply, and seepage of industrial waste water into the aquifer have aggravated the bleak scenario.

The prime reasons for an "underlying biased approach" towards the provision of the WASH rights of the poor is

- Firstly, the lack of pressure on the government, since the middle class and the upper middle class is able to afford the basic services and is unaware what a poor man goes through to achieve these basic rights.
- Secondly, the consequential erratic and politicians driven processes of decision-making regarding water supply and sanitation and planning in overall sense has precluded any systematic and long term planning for the strategic matching of increasing user demand with limited availability of natural water supply and
- Thirdly, lack of effective accountability of the state owned agencies which are responsible for allocation of resources.

The Birth Basthi Vikas Manch

Basti Vikas Manch (BVM) a "platform for the marginalised section" is the outcome of an incident when slum dwellers of Bholakpur witnessed the loss of 14 lives owing to the consumption of contaminated water supplied in the **slums (date?)**. Sheer negligence of the statutory authorities of the state on testing the water

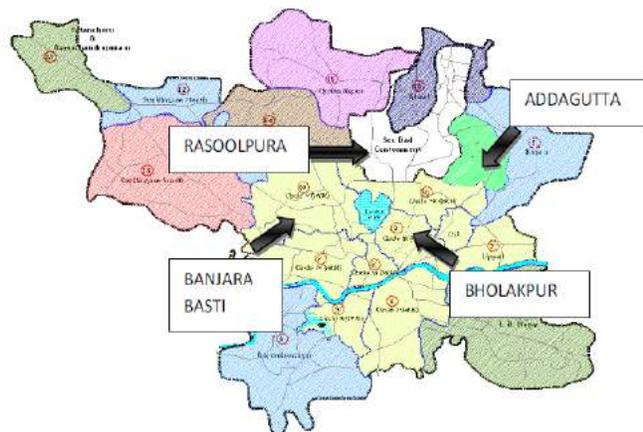


quality before releasing it and callous attitude of the government especially, towards the marginalised community led to such a disastrous incident. Children were the most vulnerable section of the incident. The communities lost hope in the legislature and the executioners. However, some common youth of the communities formed a team which extended its support and managed to rescue the victims. This team was very vibrant and later established themselves as a public platform known as Basthi Vikas Manch (BVM). Mr. Munawar Chand was made as the convenor of the BVM of Bholakpur.

The Setting of Basthi Vikas Manch

Hyderabad is currently most populous city and capital of Telangana India's newest state. The population of Hyderabad grew from 6.8 million in 2011 to 10.2 million in 2016 (67%). It has become the fourth most populous "urban agglomeration" in India. The city is the fastest growing in terms of its employment opportunities in the IT sector that is attracting a large influx of population from a broad spectrum of income categories. This has placed sudden and huge demands on its infrastructure for basic amenities – water for domestic use as also by the industry and associated infrastructure of hospitals, hotels, commercial complexes etc. Hyderabad metro water board (HMWSSB) is the main public sector agency that handles the water supply of the city. As per Census 2011, the Greater Hyderabad has 1476 slums having 1.7 million (25% of the population). The current slum population would be over 2.5 million.

Fig 4: Circle wise map of GHMC



In Phase I (2011-13) the Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability project was initiated throughout the city in 75 slums through direct intervention and an additional 100 slums through influence.

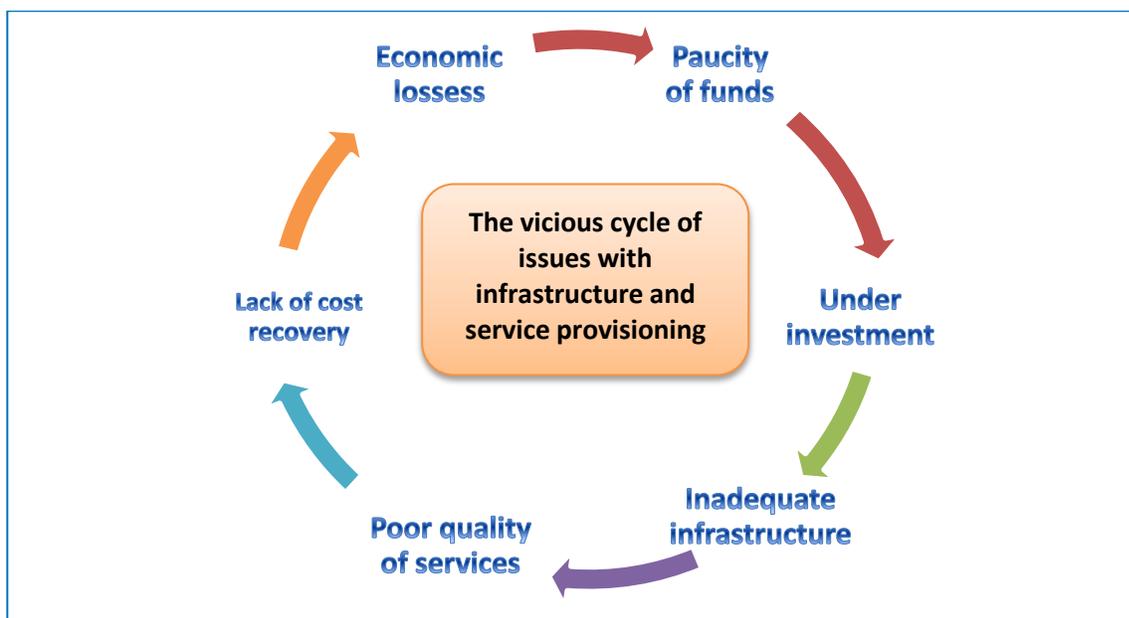
The slum dwellers do not have enough resources to treat their drinking water due to monetary constraints. Quantity of water supplied is equally a challenging issue. Poor communities get negligible water supply while influential and rich localities get copious supplies. Poor quality and inadequate supply of water cause many health hazards to these marginalised communities resulting in increased coping costs. The "excluded" suffer from "asset poverty", and suffer economic and social exclusion – resulting in sub-human living conditions in urban slums across the country (Narayanan et al 2011).

Hyderabad with ambitions to become a global city is bursting at its seams trying to cope with the demand for water from the rapidly growing population with

changes in lifestyles and aspirations. Lack of people's participation and transparency in decision making processes, vested political interests, decades old infrastructure and faulty planning contribute to the chaos in the water supply sector. Sanitation in terms of city sewage networks and municipal solid waste has failed to comply with basic environmental norms. Most of the city's untreated sewage is let out into the urban lakes leading to their gradual extinction. Increasing depletion of groundwater levels due to excessive groundwater extraction and contamination of aquifers with industrial effluents are further aggravating the crisis.

How BVM Works

BVM, with the support from Water Aid, has been demanding its rights on the civic amenities such as water and sanitation as its priority. BVM advocates for the provision of safe and secure drinking water for every resident of the community. BVM was initiated as a small group of 4-5 members, who analysed the policies and schemes and the diversion of funds sanctioned for the development of the slum communities.



BVM first focussed on inclusion and equity in basic rights on drinking water and sanitation. With project support, BVM started testing the water supplied to them using simple water testing kits. This was followed by other direct interventions

such as: Organizing press meets, Staging nonviolent protest rallies and dharnas, Filing RTI petitions on various issues, Developing a knowledge base of issues and concerns, conducting interactive hygiene education modules at the community schools, Organising interface programmes with the government officials and communities, Advocating with the state agencies to implement basic amenities to the communities.

"In the beginning, we were not confident about getting things done by government. We struggled to convince people to demand for our rights – to safe drinking water, sanitation etc. But now the situation has completely transformed. People demand politicians and government officials to honor our rights. Now are confident that collective action will work; our voices will be heard." - Mr. B. Narasimhulu, 42, volunteer turned BVM Committee member.

Basti Vikas Manch: Goal, Approach, and Strategies

Basti Vikas Manch: Goal	
To instil a capacity for collective and strategic actions for demanding and accessing WATSAN and livelihood rights through self- sustaining institutional mechanism in slum communities that will also ensure accountable community conduct	
Non-negotiables	Working principles
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secular Platform • Gender Sensitive • Independent of Political Parties • Non Violent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency • Rights and Responsibility • Collective Strength-Use and Abuse • Democratic • Ensure Accountability of Leaders • Confront and Collaborate
BVM Approach	
Evolving a Knowledge base	BVM is well equipped to understand the WASH needs of the communities. BVM works in tandem with the government to ensure that WASH services are implemented at the ground level. Further, the knowledge base created is shared with the community members through small Basthi meetings. This enables the slum dwellers to use the information during interface with the government or elected officials.
Demand for Rights	Empowers the excluded communities to claim their rights, as far as possible, in a legally enforceable manner. The BVM demands its rights through various methods such as: Developing and submitting representations to the respective government offices, peace protests, Filing RTI applications, and filing cases in Lokayukta.
Struggle through Public Pressure	Public pressure is built on both the Government and the legislative body via tools such as media highlight and advocacy, interface meeting with the elected representatives and the concerned government officers
Regulate community	BVM is responsible for the community behaviour and knowledge development. Hence, information on the issues resolved and issues pending are regularly updated at the community level. Any protest against the government or political parties is conducted within legal limits.

BVM Strategies	
Indirect pressure filing RTI	Filing of RTIA petitions is a commonly used strategy to improve basic service provision in BVS areas. This has been possible only through the collective strength of BVM. BVM units in each slum, have been given specific training on how to file a RTIA petition.

<p style="text-align: center;">Media Advocacy</p>	<p>Another indirect method of pressure building on the government that BVM employed is to provide evidence of insufficient service to concerned third parties such as members of the media since criticisms and negative reports also often reflect poorly on specific bureaucrats, politicians or agencies. Some officials and agencies appear immune to criticism. But for many, a negative press report can damage their reputation or even their career prospects. Officials or Agencies usually take quick remedial action to a prominent or particularly derogatory press report.</p> <p>While response to a RTI petition takes long time, adverse news reports bring government workers or representatives to the slums the day after. They attempt to resolve service provision issues, or at least pacify residents so that the issue does not linger on in the public domain too long.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Public demonstrations</p>	<p>Public demonstration against government or service providers is an effective mode of direct action. This is often the primary strategy of low income urban residents to raise their concerns. Large public demonstrations can be the most adversarial and risky tactic used to find quick resolution of issues which may have been long neglected.</p> <p>The Banjara Basthi Vikas Manch resorted to public demonstrations for a school building after a range engagement strategies employed over the years failed to yield results. A dharna succeeded in eliciting a promise from the GHMC Zonal Commissioner to resolve the issue. However nothing concrete has happened apart from several site visits and a feasibility report.</p> <p>Overall, demonstrations are viewed as a less sustainable means of engaging with the government, as they are adversarial and lose effectiveness if employed frequently.</p>

<p>Direct pressure: Representations</p>	<p>Representations are formal grievance mechanisms which the slum dwellers aggregate and present to local, state and national government agencies. The most prominent agencies thus engaged are: the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC), the Hyderabad Metropolitan Water Supply and Sewerage Board (HMWSSB) and, in the case of Rasoolpura, the Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB).</p> <p>The process of representation in the BVM involves soliciting the basic service concerns of local residents, putting these concerns down in writing, and filing formal requests for service upgrading with local government agencies. Concerns regarding basic services are first collected at regularly held neighbourhood BVM meetings. The complaints fielded at the neighbourhood scale are then taken to the slum level BVM meeting. Slum level leaders, in turn, file representations weekly with the responsible government agency or public representative.</p>
<p>Legal Action</p>	<p>The most direct and aggressive tactic of attempting to improve service provision which slum dwellers can pursue is legal action via the judicial system. This is clearly a high pressure tactic only available in fairly open societies. Clear challenges for slum dwellers using these tactics include the expertise needed to file and maintain legal claims, as well as capacity to pay legal fees.</p> <p>BVM participants in the slums received pro bono training from a local activist lawyer on the process of filing a Lok Ayukta claim. There are also lawyers in both the BVM units in Bholakpur and Addagutta, who have the technical capacity to file Lok Ayukta claims. This exercise has helped BVM members understand their constitutional rights as citizens and has empowered them as a community. Four cases have been filed in Lokayukta from each of the project area on issues of Sanitation in school and community against the officers for maladministration and corruption.</p> <p>As assessment of all the strategies presented above has provided partial solution as no single strategy by itself support the provision of services by the government as a permanent solution. Evidence from field research shows that multiple strategies are often utilized concurrently or sequentially. Because service needs are pressing, the quickest and most sustainable route to improve basic service security is to make slum communities aware of the range of strategies available or successfully used. A mix of various tactics proposed can also emerge as the best option for the slum communities.</p>

Three Active Communities of BVM Phase I

The communities of Addagutta (10 slum clusters), Bholakpur (17 slum clusters), Rasoolpura (10 slum clusters) were actively involved in Phase I in voicing their opinion on the provision of WASH facilities in urban slums since the project initiation. In turn, these slum areas were selected by Water Aid based on their prominence in Hyderabad as large slums.

Conveners for each area are basically the field coordinators or representatives of the community who were identified from the project area. They are actively involved in the steering the project in the right direction.

Banjara Basthi Vikas Manch, Hyderabad

Banjara Basthi is the only slum in Hyderabad where household waste is segregated before disposal. This is done without any external monitoring. Banjara Basthi can be a role model for rights based advocacy for access to basic needs -- safe drinking water, hygiene, and sanitation.

Addagutta Basthi, is known to be Asia's biggest slum (in terms of area) and is the oldest in Hyderabad. Addagutta was earlier a colony of migrant workers which came up in 1979. The area in total has 14,170 houses and has a population of 70,850. The BVM is actively engaged in 10 slums. The slums is one of the major vote banks for the political parties and during elections the contestants are seen busy canvassing door to door and giving promises to buy votes. Despite all this, the condition of this slum has for years remained unchanged. This is obvious from the garbage piled up everywhere. Open drains with some make-shift covers, drains overflowing every 10-15 days and sewage water gushing into houses are routine problems here. Water contamination and faulty water meters are common. People often fall ill and their meagre earnings are spent on check-ups and medicines. Slum dwellers say that the only development in this area in the last many years has been a small stretch of cement road, which has helped residents get their land ownership documents.

Mrs. B. Sathemma, 60, an active participant in BVM, Addagutta:

[photo]

We successfully solved drinking water problem in our area by staging a dharna and got sanctioned 23 borewells with power. By pressurizing the politicians and GHMC officials we got roads and street lights. We still continue to fight the improvement of drainage in our area. Our committee is very active and vigilant.

Bholakpur Basthi has one of the most organized and active BVM networks in Hyderabad. Historically, the **Bholakpur** Basthi has been plagued by severe water contamination issues. In 2009, at least 14 people died in Bholakpur from gastro-enteritis due to undetected E-coli in the

Mr. M. B. Monavar Chand, 38, active volunteer since 2009, now working as a BVM Cluster Coordinator

"BVM evolved as the common ideology of Addagutta, Bholakpur and Rasoolpura Basthis. The common objective is to

water provided by HMWSSB. This tragic incident prompted government action to improve the situation, including spending 1.6 million rupees for replacing water pipes. However, the effect and sufficiency of these investments is contested (Christ, 2012).

demand our rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Rasoolpura, is one of the largest notified slums in Hyderabad with a population of over two lakhs. Separate settlements within it include Sri Lanka Gun Bazaar, Indiramma Nagar, Anna Nagar and other colonies. The area is under the jurisdiction of the Secunderabad Cantonment Board (SCB), which is under the Ministry of Defence. This probably is the major hurdle which unites the rich and the poor residents of Rasoolpura as nobody takes the responsibility for the civic problems of this area. The poor struggle to access their entitlements owing to their vulnerable socio economic conditions. The ownership of the land on which these slums exist is also disputed. Unclear tenure rights remain the reason why the slums have only a limited supply of basic utilities for the slum dwellers. The occupants of these slums are mostly migrants from neighbouring areas of Hyderabad and at some point had occupied the land illegally.

Mrs. E. Hemalatha, 35 resident of Rasoolpura

[photo]

"BVM is actively dealing with local WATSAN problems of Rasoolpura Basthi since the last two years. From last year I am fully involved in BVM as a committee member. Through collective action we have succeeded in solving the problem of contaminated water by getting a new pipeline installed. I am confident that we will now be able to work out a garbage clearance plan."

Successful Basthi Vikas Manch Interventions

With the formation of Basthi Vikas Manch, the community witnessed its strength in identifying the problem and a pathway for resolving the issues by an interface with the government officials directly. School sanitation was one such intervention selected by the BVM. The BVM with the support of school children and community submitted regular representations to the concerned department officials. A School sanitation team consisting of 10 to 15 students were formed. These students were proactive and highly vocal in raising their issues, after undergoing an intense training provided by the BVM team the students visited the government offices and submitted representations on reviving their school.

Repeated representations and interfaces with the govt. officials, media highlights brought huge pressure for the concerned government department. BVM staged a protest on the children's day by blocking the road and demanding the rights for a healthy sanitary habitat.



Before the advocacy



After the advocacy

School sanitation and hygiene is an essential component of the Total Sanitation Campaign, which includes provision of toilet infrastructure and hand washing facilities in schools and hygiene education, to promote behavioural change amongst children.. The government schools in slums are again a victim of negligence in terms of provision of basic rights. Hence Basthi Vikas Manch -

Rasoolpura, recognizes the role of children as the best change agents in absorbing and popularizing new ideas and concepts of sanitation, advocating for its provision in their schools.



***Towards Sustainable Change –
School Sanitation Team,
Rasoolpura***

The Govt. High School, Gun Bazaar located in Rasoolpura slum suffered from water scarcity, unsanitary environment, and defunct toilets leading to open defecation. The

school premises had become an open garbage dump yard. The stench of this garbage was affecting the lives of the 750 students of the school. Being a government school, it primarily caters to the poor students of Rasoolpura. These children had to cope with the hopeless condition in their school - boys urinating and defecating in the open, while girls (especially the adolescent girls) preferring not to drink water for 7-8 hours while in school!

The active School Sanitation Team formed by BVS has turned the situation around. The garbage dumps have been removed and the school compound has now become green zone with trees planted and garbage bins in place. BVM is now striving to make it into a model school by getting regular water supply and functional toilets. However, the process with the government is very slow, even in the provision of basic services to school.



The school advocacy team of the Government school, Rasoolpura

A recent success was an interface meeting with the parents teachers association, students of the school with the District Collector and the elected representative (MLA) of the area for implementing the norms of right to education act in this school. Media highlighted the issues and the struggle of this school in achieving total sanitation has been the talk of the entire city. With pressure building up, the local MLA has sanctioned funds for the revival of the defunct drainage lines of the schools which were clogging the toilets and making it unsuitable for the children to use.

Private funders are approaching the BVM for installing toilets in schools but this is not a sustainable solution because there are other government schools which are deprived from their basic rights. Basthi Vikas Manch is confident of its strength in identifying the problem and resolving the issue of school sanitation at the city level without any external support.

"Get Involved"

A recent successful effort of BVM was the revival of the School management committee which was defunct. **"Get Involved"** an advocacy campaign was initiated by BVM Rasoolpura, on Children's Day in the Government School, Rasoolpura. The Student's Management Committee (SMC) of the school, the Headmaster and



Member of the school sanitation team submitting representation to the local elected representative for provision of water in schools

members of Basthi Vikas Manch, agreed to initiate

the campaign by encouraging parents to contribute an amount ranging from of Rs. 5 to Rs. 15 to support the maintenance cost of the school.

The children were briefed about the campaign and till date a total sum of Rs. 750 has been collected. The amount is being maintained by BVM Rasoolpura for transparency in fund utilisation toilets and making it unsuitable for the children to use.

Basthi Vikas Manch has witnessed its strength in identifying the problem and is taking up the issue of sanitation in schools at the city level to resolve the issues without any external support. Media advocacy has supported the intervention in the school and highlighted the plight of the school children. Beyond the above set of activity, capacity training or awareness undertakings are carried out on an ad hoc basis and at different scales which also provides the BVM with media visibility. Slum-wide events and public demonstrations are conducted annually on World Toilet and Global handwashing day and World Water Day that have been publicized by the local press.

Low-income slum pockets of the city (slum dwellers) suffer most from inadequate sanitation facilities - lack of sewerage networks and solid waste services owing to physical conditions hampering access of conventional waste collection vehicles, such as narrow lanes and unpaved roads, caused by the unauthorized and unplanned character of their neighbourhoods, and lack of technical and financial means of local governments to serve low-income neighbourhoods. The community of Ambedkar nagar Basthi have taken upon itself the responsibility of fighting for equal rights and sustainable management of their waste.

Ambedkar Nagar Basthi

Ambedkar Nagar Basthi, housed in one of the prime location of the city which lacks basic sewerage network and solid waste services. The slum was an easily forgotten destination for providing basic services like waste collection, street cleaning or timely supply of drinking water, as preference was given to the posh locality situated right behind the Ambedkar nagar Basthi (slum). Open defecation is a common sight along the drain which runs amidst the slum, with children often falling in the sewage drain. The burden of disease is on the rise in this community. Health is affected on account of both contaminated ground water and infections from disease caused due to microbes thriving on stagnant sewage on the lake.

The lackadaisical behaviour of the government towards the slum dwellers was clearly evident in case of this slum and it was during this time that the Basthi Vikas Manch (BVM) was formed with support of the project team.

Impact and Visibility of BVM Interventions

The efforts of stimulating the community strength started with a launch meeting wherein the Slum dwellers, the upper class and the concerned key government officials were invited. It was the first time when the slum dwellers of Ambedkar Basthi raised voices about their plight, expressed their issues in a platform which was originally meant only for the “benefitted” class. Post the meeting BVM was launched with just four members in the community.

The BVM realised its strength as a “community” for the first time when the local community hall, which was under the exclusive control of the local leaders and the economically powerful group, was released from their control and put at the disposal of the more democratic collective



Before project intervention (1/3/2014)



After the intervention (1/8/2014)

group. Followed by this, was the demand for community bins which were placed in slum. With this, the number of members in BVM increased from four to 10 and gradually the community supported the BVM activities.

The first major achievement of BVM –Ambedkar Nagar slum was the sanction of Rs 8.4 lakhs towards fencing of an open drainage which got an immediate response from the commissioner GHMC and work orders were issued for the renovation of the open drains. It was a Herculean task to get this issue addressed. No authority was ready to pay an ear to this issue. But with the efforts of BVM and its constant pressure on the official’s construction of a three feet wall on the naala and the 8 feet length of vertical fence on this wall was erected. This was a visible impact of participatory effort initiated by communities which led to the building of pressure on the government

Installation of segregated waste management system

Despite repeated requests by the community to extend waste collection services in the slum there was no positive response from the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC). The Basthi Vikas Manch (BVM) members decided to find an alternative for collecting their household waste. An exclusive training programme was organised for the BVM members



wherein the community was given onsite training on waste collection and the social and economic benefits of source segregation. Mr S A Kader, (prominently known as Kader Saheb), ex municipal commissioner of Warangal trained the community and donated a tricycle and bins to Ambedkarnagar. The BVM members along with the community have supported this effort by contributing user fees which is now the income of the waste collector.

Waste being segregated before collection

The door-to-door waste collection system is now an integral part of the Basthi. The community is used to the handing over their waste to the waste collector and not disposing it on the road or the neighbouring lake. There is a visible attitudinal change amongst the community and the BVM is currently striving to allocate a place for composting food waste which is at present dumped in the community bin.

Procedural Hindrance of GHMC on 11th Sep'2014

The city level BVM comprising of BVM members from the three slums-Rasoolpura, Adagutta and Bholakpur staged a protest in the premises of the GHMC office demanding attention from the Zonal Commissioner towards the reconstruction of the Community toilet in Mohammad nagar, Bholakpur. The BVM members protested against the procedural hinderances and lakadiscial behaviour of the key officials of Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation despite several written representations and requests which were ignored citing more important responsibilities like organising city festivals. The protest was covered by all the leading media and in a months time the feasibility report for the construction of the community toilet was handed over to the BVM members.



In a similar incident, 30 members of Banjara Basthi protested in front of the local MRO office demanding the feasibility report for the allocation of land for construction of a school in the slum which was pending for more than six months. The protest resulted in the immediate release of the feasibility report and a copy of the same was submitted to the BVM members.

BVM as an Empowered WATSAN Advocacy Platform

BVM has now emerged as an empowered community platform and is recognised at all the concerned departments in Hyderabad and neighbouring districts. The issues identified and prioritized by the BVM are now taken up and resolved immediately. Many other Community based organizations have started approaching BVM to draw from their learning experiences. BVM is now invited to many prestigious platforms and networking agencies to present the successful approaches adopted in addressing their issues. Since 2003, there were five

SACOSAN (South Asian Conference on Sanitation) conferences which have provided a platform for regional discussions and agenda-setting on sanitation. They aim to accelerate the progress in sanitation and hygiene promotion in South Asia and to enhance quality of people's life. BVM Bholakpur made an impactful presentation at the SACOSAN meet at Kathmandu, Nepal in November 2013.

BVM slums are also an area of interest for many researchers who try to understand the emergence of community leadership. Many political parties have now started inviting BVM volunteers to represent them. However being an apolitical body, BVM has preferred to advocate for the rights of the communities and have been conducting campaigns for "Know your leader." BVM units believe that they have just started their journey and that their movement will eventually merge with other slum communities in the city, when the marginalised sections of community become active stakeholders in city development planning and implementation.

Munawar Chand's journey from a common man of Bholakpur to being the convenor of BVM, and now representing the entire community is unique. He has meticulously organised all representations, RTIs and government policies and orders for reference.

Scaling pilots at City level and Sustainability of BVS

Phase III of Citizen's First Campaign on Drinking Water and Sanitation Accountability is already scoring successes resulting from the the capacity building and advocacy initiatives of the first and second phases of the projects. These results and activities give ample evidence for the sustainability of the BVM model for upscaling and replication across the country.

The activities and significant achievements recently include :

- i. **Basti Vikas Manch observed World Toilet Day** on 19th November 2015 by organizing a city level peace protest showcasing the pathetic condition of toilets in the government run schools in Hyderabad district. BVM submitted their demand along with the recent survey data collected on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene condition of the 77 government schools in the district. The data showed pathetic condition of schools surveyed in the districts having no proper maintenance and functional toilets without sufficient water, separate toilets for boys and girls, drainage connection for outflow from toilets and entire toilets require immediate repair with basic requirement such as tap connection, regular maintenance and bucket.
- ii. **GIS based Issue Mapping: The project has undertaken** GIS mapping of the 86 slums at the slum level to be used for advocacy and inform the government on the social and environmental issues affecting these slums. This will be a valuable tool for advocacy, and progress and impact monitoring.

- iii. **Global Hand Washing Day** was organized along with the slum communities on October 15th at the Gun Bazaar school, Rasulpura, Hyderabad



Children demonstrating hand washing lessons on Global Hand Washing Day

- iv. **Mass Media Advocacy is a proven tool for triggering action by government and other stakeholders:** BVM held a press conference on 3rd November on several issues at the Secunderabad Cantonment Level and the issues in the schools on non-availability of water, sanitation and hygiene in schools and slums including; non-availability of CEO; no action on representation; the State government does not take action as schools under cantonment board.
- v. **Meeting with Commissioner of GHMC:** BVM members met the newly appointed commissioner of Greater Hyderabad Metro Corporation (GHMC) Mr. Janardhan Reddy and explained the work undertaken by the Basti Vikas Manch. While appreciating the work of BVS and assuring support the Commissioner asked BVS to work on Solid Waste Management activities in the slums and streamline it.
- vi. **Capacity Building Training on Water, Sanitation & Hygiene in Urban Areas was conducted by WaterAid and Citizen First team on** Swacch Bharat Mission (Urban) Guidelines, Implementation mechanisms, efficient technologies used in the Urban Local Bodies and the need of city wide approach in Urban WASH.
- vii. **BVM wins Lokayukta case for Banjara Basti Schools:** After a long legal battle, for ensuring WASH for the school childrens in Banjara Basti, BVS

won the case with an order to the district authority to ensure proper WASH in the school. Notice will be issued to the directorate of school education and the district education office to implement the RTE Act, Lokayukta will also investigate to check the feasibility of building a proper school in the slum.

- viii. **Shifting garbage dumping site (... location??) was a major success of BVM** after a long battle with the GHMC. The garbage dumping site was a threat to the 30,000 inhabitants around the area. Following persistent dialogue with the authorities as well as filing several representations, GHMC authorities shifted the garbage to another site, removing a major environmental and health hazard for the community.
- ix. Public toilets: The issue of public toilets still remains a grey area, as several representations in this regard have led to extensive discussions and analysis, but not resulted into any concrete action. The issue of public toilets in slums also brings into the forefront several other issues such as provision of regular water supply, and the need to train the community on usage of toilets. The Project is trying to activate defunct toilets through the GHMC. This will be a challenging task for the project in the current phase.
- x. **Cluster level meeting on federating Basti Vikas Manch at city level** were organized to discuss the concept of BVM, understanding the concept of REI (rights, equity and Inclusion), how to continue their struggle in ensuring WASH, and the idea of federating this community level platform as a city level advocacy platform for wider reach and sustainable outcomes.

Ensuring Sustainability

Gregory Scott Pierce (2015), who studied how collectively organized initiatives redress inequalities in BVM slums of Hyderabad for his doctoral dissertation, observes:

"Levels of basic service security remain insufficient for many urban households situated in slums in low and middle income countries. Given the slow and inadequate response of the local state to improve provision, households often must proactively employ strategies to secure services. In the context of many slums, participation in collective action—or collective voice— has been hailed as the most effective means to improve local public goods provision. Acute experience of basic service deficiencies is the most important predictor of collective voice, while knowledge of local conditions and age of the household head are also consistently associated with participation (Pierce, 2015:2-3)

Government's commitment and the various interventions and strategies may not be adequate enough to deal with the issues in the long term. Hence there is a need to create a vibrant platform which can monitor water sanitation and hygiene situation on its own and interface with the government to resolve community and city level issues.

To ensure the sustainability of the project, the following efforts are under way:

- Increased Citizen and Government interface for WASH infrastructure in the slums
- Training the community on monitoring the drinking water quality and demanding the right to water and sanitation
- Increasing the number of members in BVM and developing second line leadership.
- Regular training for the BVM members on the upcoming policy and schemes and ways to leverage support from private and public body.

The Way Forward

Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability and the Basthi Vikas Manch have proven to be a successful model of a right based approach to solve WATSAN issues in urban areas.

There is scope for keeping the vibrancy of the advocacy forum in dealing with local issues without institutionalising it under government, political, NGO, corporate or private sponsorship or patronage. Local Communities will still need capacity building support from relevant stakeholders.

Funds would be necessary for building and maintaining infrastructure. But proper utilisation of available funds would be sufficient. What is important is to guarantee that allocated funds are properly utilised.

Citizen's First Campaign on Water Supply and Sanitation Accountability and the Basthi Vikas Manch model is replicable for sustainable WASH implementation. In the context of Swachh Bharat campaigns, the BVM model is viable for urban slums and settlements to cope with the water and sanitation challenges in the context of rapid urbanisation.

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“If you've come here to help me, you're wasting your time. But if you've come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together”

– By Elder Lilla Watson

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