

Wai, Maharashtra

A Journey of a town towards 'Improved Sanitation'....



Wai is a class C council and a small pilgrim city in Satara district of Maharashtra, with a population of 36,025 (Census 2011). Situated along the River Krishna, it is known as DakshinKashi and is well known for its Ghats and over 250 temples. It is a picturesque city located 95 kms from Pune and is one of the major shooting destinations for the Indian film industry. According to Census 2011, out of 7580 HH in the city 5143 households have toilets on premises, 2300 households are dependent on community toilets and 135 households defecate in the open.

In 2013, City Sanitation Plan (CSP) was prepared in consultation with the Wai Council by PAS team at CEPT University, Ahmedabad and All India Institute of Local Self Government (AIILSG), Mumbai in partnership with Water Supply and Sanitation Department (WSSD), Government of Maharashtra and Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran (MJP). The CSP suggested an innovative approach for universal sanitation and waste water management.

Wai Municipal Council (WMC) decided to take up implementation of two key actions in their CSP for making Wai Open Defecation Free and a city-wide septage management plan. Recognising importance of 'improved sanitation' for improved health, WMC has prioritized 'own toilets' over the publicly maintained community toilets. To promote use of individual and group toilets, Wai Municipal Council (WMC) launched a city level demand led scheme even before the Swachh Bharat Mission was launched. The scheme provides incentive subsidies to

households that are willing to construct their own toilets. WMC passed a city level resolution to grant subsidy of Rs. 10,000 per household from its own funds, which assured increased subsidy with increased number of households that are willing to share a toilet. For this, WMC designed a scheme, developed an implementation and monitoring framework, did financial assessments of the ULB annual budgets and conducted IEC and awareness activities for scheme promotion.

With the pan India implementation of Swachha Bharat Abhiyan, implemented in Maharashtra as Swachha Maharashtra Abhiyan, an additional subsidy of Rs. 12,000 per household is being provided to the households. This has further acted as a catalyst to the city level scheme launched by the council.



Figure 1: Scheme promotion using banners in public spaces



Figure 2: WMC staff accepting applications for 'Own/ Group Toilet Scheme'



Figure 3: WMC staff on field promoting the scheme among citizens



Figure 4: Toilets being constructed in Wai under 'Own/ Group Toilet Scheme'

In order to make the city ODF and implement an integrated faecal septage management plan, the council recognized the need for a comprehensive database on existing sanitation situation for Wai. WMC conducted a city wide property survey using personal digital assistants (PDAs) to generate sanitation database required for implementation of schemes for more targeted and effective interventions.



The survey found that affordability was one of main reasons for not having an on-premise own toilet. With an aim to provide access to credit to the households, sustainable options for extending 'Toilet Loans' to the households are being explored. Consultations with banks, credit cooperative societies, housing finance institutions and micro finance institutions are under progress. Lending for toilets through existing Self Help Groups is also being explored.

With more toilets being constructed in the city, the council realizes the importance of efficient management of faecal sludge collected from the septic tanks for public health and environment. There is a need to meet the standards (IS codes and CPHEEO manuals) of septic tanks being emptied every 2-3 years. The current practice in Wai is done on demand basis by the city council and many septic tanks are not emptied for a long time. Wai council has passed a resolution to implement septage management plan which includes a regulated cleaning of septic tanks and treatment of collected faecal sludge in sludge drying beds (SDBs). WMC has prepared a DPR for construction of SDBs and is exploring sources of funding for executing the same.

The council understands that mobilization of funds is important to implement these schemes. While ULB's own funds and state schemes are key sources to be tapped, these may not be sufficient to meet all the funding requirements. Therefore the Council is also trying to mobilize additional funds from a variety of local benefactors. For this 'Wai Swachhata Kosh' has been set up by the Council..

WMC is striving to achieve targets set under Swachh Maharashtra Abhiyan. It may be one of the first cities in the State in making systematic efforts for moving towards 100% coverage of own toilets and implementing a city wide septage management plan. Wai Municipal Council is supported in implementing sanitation schemes in Wai by the PAS team at CEPT University, Ahmedabad and AILSG, Mumbai.