

CASE STUDY

2016/No. 56



Dulla Gram Panchayat
Kadium Mandal
East Godavari District

Sarpanch Whistles ODF Reaps



Photo Credit: R. Srinivasa Rao, Program Officer, PRIA

An interesting story was found that in Gundlasagaram Gram Panchayat (GP) of Gudupalle Mandal of Chittoor District. As a father everyone wants their children be happy, for that it requires of providing basic facilities for them. Everyone thinks it should be money, education, health, food, marriage, future and other facilities. But it when it comes to sanitation matter, they won't even think of providing basic sanitation facilities for children's. But as a father the responsibility will come, when once the daughter gets married.

As a boy's fathers think that their daughter in law doesn't want to go out for defecation. For that most of them are pre planning the toilet facility and then thinking about the marriage plans. Meanwhile the girl's fathers also searching for better bridegroom those having the toilet facilities. Once the daughter's marriage over, they are not preferring toilet. Because they thought their responsibilities is over and the daughter settled in very well manner. But they are not thinking about the son in law situation and how a newly married son in law should go for open defecation in a new place. Male or female is nothing matter, but how it should embarrass to someone going out for toilet in the uncle's village. The story should tell the importance and it should require for all.

Attitudes being an obstacle overcome by Whistle and other IEC activities...

The biggest challenge towards elimination of open defecation everywhere is attitudes of people. Since ages people are habituated to open defecation. People never thought of defecating in the open is something, which is not good and healthy practice. Similar was the case with Dulla Gram Panchayat. All roads, canals, places near tanks were always with full of faeces. Recognizing the attitudes as first issue to be addressed, the sarpanch with conviction put efforts to change attitudes of households from doing open defecation to having a toilet. He immediately started implementing the whistle technique he learnt by Mandal MPDO.



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- **Whistle:** The Sarpanch by walking and using his own motor cycle did this going round all open defecation areas daily in the early morning (4am – 6 am) and Evening (6pm – 9.30pm). This has become a great problem for people defecating in the open, particularly women. Some did strong quarrel with Sarpanch for doing this. Yet, the sarpanch stood affirm and unwaver. While making whistles, he conveyed the messages that open defecation is not good practice. Government has introduced SBM for clean sanitation, through which we can construct toilets using incentive of Rs.15000/- and live with dignity and care for our environment. As the Sarpanch did it on daily basis with vigor, households started showing willingness to have toilets as the whistle was bothering them. Moreover, sarpanch is a retired head master and everybody honors him. Later, the Sarpanch formed 6 whistle committees each with 6 members with members who wanted to support him in this. The sarpanch was also a member of a committee. The committees distributed the areas and continued the task. The sarpanch bore fuel expenditure of committees.
- **Door to door visits and Tilkam to women:** Beside whistle, Sarpanch held door-to-door visits as part of awareness campaign along with teams, in which women were part. The teams invited women in the households with Tilkam on the forehead to join hands for achieving swachh Dulla by construction and usage of toilets. This has created tremendous response in the GP.

Lack of finance overcome by Construction of toilets by third party..

With the above regular activities, households had shown their consent to have toilets. Nevertheless, lack of finance had been a constraint for about 125 households to initiate work. The issue was brought to the notice of the Sarpanch. The Sarpanch through third party constructed 125 toilets for such households. Initially, the Sarpanch invested in 1.60 Lakhs from his own source, which was repaid to him later. Sri. Papa Rao, who acted as third party agency started the construction with the funds given by Sarpanch. The third party directly received incentives of households. The beneficiaries had borne the excess expenditure incurred over and above the incentive.

Lack of Space did not stop the goal...

The Gram Panchayat constructed Community toilets with individual ownership for 70 households who did not have space for toilet at their house. The complexes were constructed at seven places in the GP, which have Separate toilets for both male and female with 24X7 water supply and electricity. And, some toilets are kept for those who visit the village.



Community cum Individual Toilets Photo Credit: R. Srinivasa Rao, Program Officer, PRIA

Success factors:

1. Sarpanch conviction and initiation and committees support
2. Mandal officials support and Mandal level sensitization activities
3. IEC activities
4. Whistle
5. Regular monitoring
6. Third party construction
7. Community complexes

Sustainability of ODF:

The Gram Panchayat wants to continue the whistle system through committees. In addition, the GP made a resolution that hereafter, even after the provision of toilets, if any person in the GP including other villagers who visit the GP defecates in the open shall be fined Rs.500/-. The person who catches the one who defecates shall be rewarded with an amount of Rs.200. In this regard, the GP displayed boards and wall paints in and around the village.

Conclusion: The whistle system and door- to –door invitation with tilakam have yielded wonderful results. This kind of activities may be encouraged in other villages as part of IEC activities.