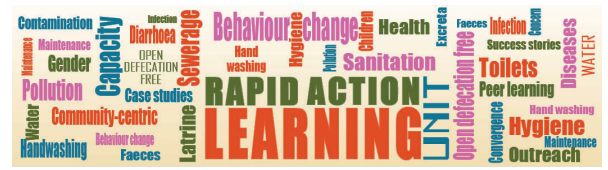


CASE STUDY

2016/No. 8



Chodavaram Gram Panchayat
Penamaluru Mandal
Krishna District

A Journey of CHODAVARAM towards achieving Open Defecation free Status



Even when we have fool proof plans for a project, sometimes strange challenges arise, as it happened with Chodavaram Gram Panchayat (GP) in Penamaluru mandal of Krishna District. The village with a total population of 3384 in 980 households has been declared as Open Defecation Free village in 2015. Though most of the households had constructed toilets with their own money, complete coverage of sanitation with respect to toilets was achieved by constructing 37 Individual Household Latrines (IHHs) for the left over households under SBM.

However, the major challenge for Chodavaram was the lack of IHHs in the houses which stood on encroached lands along the banks of a canal. IHHs are not permitted under SBM scheme for such households so the situation was notified to the GP team when an initial baseline survey was conducted to estimate the number of households without IHHs. This obstacle was a hard one to break as, on the one hand, ignoring these households would mean letting open defecation take place; but, on the other, SBM does not provide financial assistance to such households and the households themselves being BPL could in no circumstance initiate and complete construction on their own.

The Vice-Sarpanch, who was very keen on improving the sanitation situation of the village took up the case of such households with special interest. He decided to invest for the IHHs of these houses and donated minimum material required for the construction of a toilet to all of them. In addition, the Vice-Sarpanch encouraged the households to



Temporary IHHLs constructed for encroached households

construct IHHLs by contributing physical labour and utilizing the minimum material provided, thus making it possible for each and every household in the GP to have an IHHL.

Under the able leadership of the Panchayat Secretary and a coordinated effort by the Sarpanch and Vice-Sarpanch, Chodavaram witnessed a shift from being in the clutches of open defecation to a GP that is open defecation free. Motivation activities served as a backbone for this program

specifically the door-to-door campaigns by the GP team (consisting of the Sarpanch, Vice-Sarpanch, Field assistants, ANMs, Anganwadis, ASHA workers) through which many households were convinced to take up the construction of IHHLs.

It will not be an exaggeration to say that the GP team stood with the community at all times to ensure that the process of achieving improved sanitation is successful. Residents of Chodavaram who completed construction of IHHLs under SBM faced an issue of delay in payments of the incentive offered in the scheme. The GP which was tracking and monitoring the progress of IHHLs at all levels immediately identified the issue and worked on it. Speaking about this, the Panchayat Secretary who took a lead in solving this issue said “though initial payments from SBM were timely, there was later a delay in payment. We realized that this delay is demotivating the individuals who are yet to take up construction as they started to feel that by constructing an IHHL they would simply waste their money. “To address this issue, the Panchayat Secretary (PS) made numerous visits to the Mandal office and pursued for release of payments every day until the payment was received by the households.

There are still some challenges facing the village. Chodavaram being an area of fertile land, witnesses migration of around 400-600 labourers three times each year, seeking work in this area. These labourers stay for a period of 10-20 days every time they come for work. But, since there are no community toilets or any other facilities for these labourers, they have no option but to defecate in the open. It is incumbent upon the GP team to jot down a plan for the 400-600 in migrants who regularly come and stay for work in the village.

