Improving Urban Poor’s Access to Sanitation: Community-Led Sanitation Program, Sangli, India

India
Pratima Joshi

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Delivery of basic services to the urban poor based on findings of GIS based poverty mapping.

File attachments:

WEDC Conference Paper_Community led Sanitation[1].pdf

About You

Location

Project Street Address
Project City
Project Province/State
Project Postal/Zip Code
Project Country

Your idea

Field of Work
Sanitation

Year the initiative began (yyyy)
2005

YouTube Upload
http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2930602159465516460&hl=en

Web site (url)
http://www.shelter-associates.org

Positioning of your initiative on the mosaic diagram:

Which of these barriers is the primary focus of your work?
Limited focus on long-term impact

Which of the principles is the primary focus of your work?
Move people up the sanitation ladder

If you believe some other barrier or principle should be included in the mosaic, please describe it and how it would affect the positioning of your initiative in the mosaic

Lack of information is a major barrier in effective service delivery

Innovation

What is your signature innovation, your new idea, in one sentence?
Delivery of basic services to the urban poor based on findings of GIS based poverty mapping.

Describe your innovation. What makes your idea unique and different than others doing work in the field?

The Community-Led Sanitation Program at Sangli, Western India is assisting 3,500 households across twelve slums in the city gain access to adequate sanitation facilities. The initiative is a partnership between the local government (Sangli Miraj Kupwad Municipal Corporation); international agencies (USAID, Indo-US FIRE-D, Cities Alliance); a non-government organisation (Shelter Associates) and community based organisation (Baandhani). The Sangli experience demonstrates how spatial mapping, social surveys and GIS can be used to ascertain community sanitation priorities and to develop feasible technical designs. The model emphasises individual toilets as a solution to urban poor’s sanitation problems and also demonstrates effective community toilet management structures. The program effectively utilises donor, public and private funding along with facilitating households to invest their own resources towards infrastructure development. Provision of adequate sanitation facilities has proved to be
an effective entry point for citywide slum up-gradation.

**Delivery Model: How do you implement your innovation and apply it to the challenge/problem you are addressing?**

Scientifically collected spatial data in the form of maps drawn using plane table survey showing the location of houses and other community resources(4) along with socio economic data collected through settlement level and census household surveys(5) have been effectively fused using GIS platform. The data thus gathered has enabled detailed analysis of every slum community for ascertaining level of access to sanitation facilities; community needs, demands and aspirations vis-a-vis sanitation facilities; and for designing community specific interventions. This entire process was supervised and carried out by the SA/Baandhani team involving local community members. The community ownership of the data is very high as they were actively involved in data collection and analysis. This process has enabled development of effective solutions to sanitation problems and has resulted in a valuable data source for other interventions aimed at pro-poor service delivery that may be taken up by the local government in future.

**How do you plan to expand your innovation?**

First through dissemination of information on this project to build awareness. This model has been captured in a 13mins documentary film produced by Yashada an apex training institute in Maharashtra. The 33rd WEDC international conference has selected a paper co-authored by us for presentation this year. The Birmingham University is already supporting a project which is documenting the entire project in Sangli. Secondly we are in touch with ULB’s to introduce them to this model and exploring ways of working on similar lines with them. Recently, RCUES and UNICEF has selected Shelter as member of the Task Force committee being set up for framing sanitation policies for the government of Uttar Pradesh. These are some ways in which we are trying to expand our innovation.

**Do you have any existing partnerships, and if so, how do you create them?**

The initiative is being implemented through a partnership between various stakeholders, including the local government, NGOs, CBOs and urban poor communities working together to ensure improved access to sanitation facilities for the urban poor.

The program has been supported by various international agencies providing financial and technical support including Cities Alliance (CA), USAID’s Community Water and Sanitation Facility (CWSF) / Indo US FIRE-D Project, and the Institute of Governance (IoG), Canada. It is also supported by the Government of India and the Maharashtra state government.

The initiative has received support from both the executive and the elected wings (across party lines) of the local government. The recent declaration by the SMKMC to support 40 percent of the construction cost is a testimony of their support.

The initiative has also been successful in leveraging financial resources from private individuals - ‘Friends of Shelter Associates’ formed by a professor at Connecticut College has helped raise almost US$30,000 that will help extend the initiative to some more slum settlements.

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**Impact**

**Provide one sentence describing your impact/intended impact.**

This model has emerged as an effective solution for ensuring improved service delivery for the urban poor.

**What are the main barriers to creating or achieving your impact?**

Transfer of this technology to the Government department has been a major hurdle. The apathy amongst officers to issues related to the poor are is one of the main barriers. Also this kind of database brings in transparency which challenges vested intere

**How many people have you served or plan to serve?**

The project aimed at covering 3500 families in 12 settlements with access to a range of options in sanitation from individual/shared toilets to community toilets and this has been achieved. There has been a major paradigm shift in the local governments attitude towards sanitation. This model has become deeply entrenched in the Local government to the extent that any new projects undertaken is now on a cost sharing basis, with involvement of all Stakeholders and with an emphasis on providing individual toilets as far as possible. Now Shelter is already discussing possibilities of doing similar work in other Municipal bodies.

**Directly**

The citywide community-led sanitation program has resulted in improved access of 3500 families in urban poor communities to sanitation services. The slums that have been covered by the initiative till date had minimal/no access to sanitation facilities and now have adequate sanitation facilities through individual (wherever technically feasible) or community toilets. The improvements in sanitation infrastructure coupled with improved hygiene behaviour among communities has resulted in better health and improved well-being for the target communities.

**Indirectly**

In order to ensure that the creation of improved sanitation infrastructure results in improved health status and personal well being there is a need for demand creation through hygiene promotion. Recognizing the need for a holistic approach whereby infrastructure development and hygiene promotion go hand in hand workshops were organized. These interventions have resulted in improved hygiene practices like regular hand washing after using the toilet/disposing child faeces and use of soap, etc.

In an attempt to address the poor environmental sanitation in urban poor communities in a holistic manner, the initiative has also embarked upon integrating Solid Waste Management (SWM) in some of the selected slums following strong demands from the communities. With technical support from a vermiculature expert, awareness sessions were organised on issues such as handling wet and dry garbage, need for garbage segregation, and garbage management. Composting was initiated in earmarked areas as well as in pots. The initiative has resulted in a definite reduction in garbage littered around the settlement/dumped in gutters/drain, and the communities now had green areas that are being used for growing vegetables.

The City has benefitted as some wards have become defecation free.

**Please list any other measures of the impact of your innovation?**

The Sangli experience has highlighted the need for a multi stakeholder partnership anchored by the local government for improving services for the poor. The initiative has been successful in leveraging funds from a variety of international donors, local area development funds available with the local government and also from private individuals.
Is there a policy intervention element to your innovation, if so please describe?

The Sangli model has emerged as an effective solution for ensuring improved service delivery for the poor. The model aligns itself with the Government of India's urban reform linked program called Jawahar Lal Nehru Urban Renewal Mission. This mission's program on Basic Services for the Urban Poor provides a great opportunity for providing financial support to ensure wide scale replication of this model across various Indian cities.

Exactly who are the beneficiaries of your innovation?

We work with the urban poor in cities of Maharashtra State, India. So it is the slumdwellers who become the direct beneficiaries of our innovation.

Sustainability

How is your initiative financed (or how do you expect your initiative will be financed)?

The initiative is being supported by Cities Alliance (CA) and USAID's Community Water and Sanitation Facility (CWSF). The total support from CA is US$ 182,000; of which US$107,000 is for construction of toilets and US$ 75,000 is for technical assistance. While the support from CA would cover 20 percent of the construction cost of community toilets the remaining 80 percent is being contributed by Government of India and the State Government. In case of individual toilets the beneficiary contribution is twenty percent, while the local government and CA funding contributes forty percent each.

Provide information on your finances and organization:

Our current annual budget has been approximately Rs. 30 lakhs and this has been the pattern in the last two years. We have received grants from International agencies like Cities Alliance, USAID as well as project related consultancies from Local government.

What is the potential demand for your innovation?

This can be applied anywhere globally. We were invited to demonstrate the effectiveness of this in one of the slums of Surabaya city where we did a pilot project. We require a core staff of at least 18 members comprising Social Workers, Community workers, accountants and technical experts like architects and GIS analysts on a full time basis. We get a steady stream of architectural volunteers every year.

What are the main barriers to financial sustainability?

There are really no barriers to financial sustainability and creating an information base about the poor within a city costs very little to the city compared to the annual budget outlay. The benefits of having this in place is enormous as it helps allocate funds effectively and where required and minimises wastage. Currently most cities waste enormous resources and funds on implementing projects which don't have the desired impact or often just fail as they are inappropriate.

The Story

What is the origin of this innovation? Tell us your story.

We pioneered GIS based poverty mapping in-house in 1999-2000 as we realized that most governments lack data bout the poor in their cities who often constitute more than 40% of the city's population. The existing data normally was totally outdated and scattered between various departments who worked in isolation of each other. Also the existing socio-economic data was either in the form of reams of paper or maps of settlements which could not be co-related. We felt the need to not only create a database about the poor by harnessing technology but make it intelligent data where you could see results spatially. This was possible using a GIS platform where data and maps could be integrated. This allowed spatial querying and the results could be shared with all concerned stakeholders to help them plan for a better environment in their settlement. We enlisted the support of the local community members to gather data from every household which ensured quality data. It also brought in transparency and accountability in the process. We have been able to demonstrate through various projects ranging from sanitation to housing the effectiveness of having such data in place. It has also encouraged communities to participate in finding effective solutions to their problems as they 'owned' the data that they had helped gather.

Please provide a personal bio. Note this may be used in Changemakers marketing material

Pratima is one of the founder members of Shelter Associates (SA) and has been working in SA since its inception in 1993. She received an Aga Khan scholarship in 1986-87 and completed her Masters Degree in ‘Building Design for Developing Countries’ at the Bartlett School of Architecture and Planning, London. In October 2005, the BBC identified her as one of the leading Slum architects of India and did a feature on her for their ‘India Week’ which was launched on their website. In 2006 she has been the recipient of the Ashoka Fellowship in recognition of her work as a Social Entrepreneur. Recently she was selected by The Straits Times, Singapore who featured her under their series ‘New Asian heroes’ Within SA, Pratima has worked intensively to co-ordinate all projects that have been undertaken since its inception in 1993 ranging from actual implementation of housing and sanitation projects to Poverty Mapping and related Research projects.

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