



Gram Panchayats – Leading the way towards Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Security

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WaterAid

The Context



- Funds not a constraint – Union and State schemes + 15th Finance Commission allocations



- Central role for Panchayats in implementing and managing – High expectations but low investment in their capacities



- Panchayats perceived as implementing agencies not institutions of self-governance



Elappully Panchayat, Palakkad,



Lalpur Panchayat, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh - 1



Lalpur Panchayat, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh - 2



Sonpur Panchayat, Kanker, Chhattisgarh

- Identified the challenge of constructing leach pit toilets in some terrains
- Additional support from Gram Panchayat Funds to construct EcoSan Toilets
- Led to the district recognising the importance of terrain appropriate toilets – in areas with a high-water table or with rocky terrain – and allocation of additional resources for EcoSan and BioToilets
- Household survey to identify people with disabilities and supported modification of toilets and some new ones

Rajpurkuti Panchayat, Indore, Madhya Pradesh

- Reconstituted the Village Water and Sanitation Committee – ensuring 50% representation of women and inclusion of women from all habitations and sections
- 200 litre storage tanks distributed to marginalised families to enable them to store water
- During summer months uses private borewells to supply drinking water
- Roof rainwater harvesting structures at government institutions
- Operation and Maintenance and water distribution plan as well as tariffs established – exemption for vulnerable families and a women pump operator to run the piped water supply



Dhabuti Panchayat, Sehore, Madhya Pradesh

- 17 new farm ponds to enhance water storage
- Desiltation of two drains to increase retention capacity of check dams and enhance recharge
- 150 farmers have adopted sprinkler based irrigation instead of flood irrigation
- Decentralised soak pits to manage waste water through panchayat funds and household contributions
- Handwashing stations and toilets for differently abled persons in the school



Common elements for success

- Transparency
- Participation/Influence of other collectives
- Women's leadership
- Leveraging resources from diverse sources but more importantly contributing to the investment
- Taking charge – not waiting for others
- Supportive administration
- Voluntary organisations as facilitators and catalysts



Emerging Challenges - 1



Emerging Challenges - 2



Emerging Challenges - 3



Emerging Challenges - 4



Emerging Challenges - 5



Emerging Challenges - 6



Emerging Challenges - 7



Strengthening Gram Panchayats



- Recognition of Gram Panchayats as institutions of self-governance



- Supporting the essential requirements of an independent institution – funds, taxes, personnel



- Focus on the general body/ward and gram sabha and not merely the executive



- Sustained and repeated investments in building perspectives, transfer of knowledge, motivation for action and technical support
- Clarity/Strengthening of Block/District level institutions
- Recognition of the linkages – education, public health, water, sanitation, livelihoods

