Ahmedabad Slum Networking Programme

Region	**Asia and the Pacific**
Award Scheme	**Guangzhou Award**
Start Year	**2006**
Sustainable Development Goals	**Goal 11 - Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable**

Summary

The objective of the ongoing Slum Networking Project in the city of Ahmedabad is transformation of the urban environment through a unique partnership between the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, (AMC), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and communities.

Background and Objective

SITUATION BEFORE THE INITIATIVE BEGAN In the city of Ahmedabad about 20% population comprising of 1,76,754 families lived in sub-human (slums) conditions at 710 pockets. There profile could be described as under: From 710 slum pockets, as per Town Planning Department of AMC it is possible to provide the services to 417 slum pockets. Out of which 190 slums comprising of 47,300 families are living with inadequate facilities. These slums are prime target by AMC for the provision of basic infrastructure services. ESTABLISHMENT OF PRIORITIES Efforts for providing basic services in slum settlements have been ongoing in India, Gujarat and in Ahmedabad since the early seventies through Government programs like Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums (EIUS), National Slum Development Program (NSDP) and others. However, the approach of providing a few of the priority services in parts or some of the slums neither changed the quality of life of the slum dwellers nor did it change the environmental conditions of the area. The Slum Networking approach adapted by Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), though based on the slum networking approach of the DFID funded Indore Habitat Improvement Project (IHIP), is substantially different in its settlement level approach and to partnerships with NGOs and communities. In Ahmedabad, SNP is undertaken only in those slums where all slum households arrive at a consensus for contributing a proportion of the implementation costs (Rs 2000) for getting household level water supply, sewerage and drainage connections. NGOs partner with AMC for generating awareness about the project and in motivating all slum residents to agree to participate in the project. This task is quite difficult because simultaneously, other government schemes enable slums residents to access community level services at no cost. The well-off households in the slums often have illegal connections and hence participation in the programme is not a priority for them. SNP in Ahmedabad has therefore been designed to provide a package of infrastructure services in consultation with communities/ CBOs, NGO and the private sector. From its inception, SNP was designed to ensure that NGO partners directly provided or enabled access of communities to health and education services. The partnerships with the private sector have not grown substantially while AMC's partnership with NGOs for implementation of SNP has evolved substantially since the implementation of a pilot project in Sanjay Nagar in 1996-97. FORMULATION OF OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES The main objective of this initiative is to integrate the slum dwellers with the main stream of the society through the provision of basic, physical infrastructure and social service to improve their quality of life. The strategy adopted was to involve the community as a partner and owner of the project. This could be achieved with the help of NGOs as they have the will and capacities to motivate the community. NGOs were, therefore, made a partner in the project for meeting the part cost of the project and to make the project a people's project private sector was also involved as a partner in the project. This strategy worked well to the extent possible. Moreover, the establishment of a Resident's Association for release of community contributions from the Banks to AMC at different stages of completion of infrastructure works and for managing the operation and maintenance in each settlement has also resulted in capacity enhancement of the slum residents. The financial arrangements evolved for safeguarding financial contributions of individual households through deposits in individual accounts till such time that transfers have to be made to AMC, have also contributed significantly to reducing perceived risks by communities. Not only that, the exposure and opportunities for managing savings and consequent access to loans has also empowered the communities and individual households. Currently, AMC's partnerships with NGOs for implementation of SNP has evolved such that NGOs are planning, designing and implementing infrastructure works in slums. AMC's role has evolved further to checking of design, supervision of implementation and overall monitoring the progress of work. As of December 2005, SNP has been undertaken in 41 slum communities covering 8703 households benefiting 43,515 people. Out of which infrastructure work has been completed in 28 slum communities and work ongoing in 13 slum communities. This change in implementation process over the years shows AMC's conviction in the partnering approach and need for slum residents to demonstrate willingness to get individual connections for availing water supply and sanitation services. MOBILISATION OF RESOURCES Financial Resources. The project aimed at a partnership concept. So all the partners had to share the cost of the physical services and community development in the projections shown in the table below. * Communitycorpus (Rs. 100) per household will remain with the association (CBO) and they will use it for the minor maintenance work. AMC has made adequate provision in its annual budgets for SNP and has also availed funds under Government of India's National Slum Development Programme (NSDP), and financial support of HUDCO. Initial actions for availing World Bank finances for scaling up of SNP citywide have not yet resulted in any funding support from the World

Bank. Technical Resources. The city corporation has adequate technical capacity to provide technical support to the project. A SNP cell was constituted of technical personnel to implement the project professionally. Human Resources. Community was mobilised through NGOs to take part in the project. NGOs provided human resources to provide local services and municipal corporation made available their technical and skill manpower for services provided. Human Resources of Mahila Housing SEWA Trust Mahila Housing SEWA Trust started with two people. One Coordinator and one Field Worker. Today MHT is present in all the five zones of the city covering more than 59 slums and a zonal system for effective implementation of SNP has been established. The spearhead team members promote the concept of SNP in the areas allotted to them. They educate the slum dwellers on the various aspects of the programme. They report to the organisers, who in turn report to the zonal in charge. All the zonal incharge report to the SNP incharge, who is responsible to the Coordinator. All this comes under the Community Mobilisation Cell. Parallel to this cell is the Training Cell. The training cell has two trainers, who look after the capacity building of the Community and the CBOs. They are also involved in the activities involving convergence with various other government schemes. They also look after the post SNP maintenance aspect of the programme. Human Resources of SAATH Provision of physical infrastructure in slums and chawls of Ahmedabad was one of the components of SAATH's overall mission of working for Integrated Slum Development (services such as community health, non formal education, livelihood, community participation, physical infrastructure). SAATH's human resources for the Physical Infrastructure component (SNP Project) are – one overall co-ordinator, one field co-ordinator, two activity co¬ordinators. Apart from this core group, three members from three of the CBOs promoted by SAATH provide the required assistance when needed. The team is helped by administrative support for maintenance of accounts, records at the office by a data manager, accountant. SEWA Bank SEWA Bank plays an important role by providing loan and bank account facility to the slum dwellers. As a result helping them in availing the benefits of the project. To avail the basic facilities provided under SNP the slum dwellers are required to pay Rs.2100 as one time contribution. SEWA Bank by providing loan for the same, helps them to get the basic facilities under SNP Yojna. For the SNP project SEWA Bank has deployed 22 employees and have 18 Bank Sathis to mobilize savings and credit from the slum communities.

Actions and Implementation

The most difficult task is to motivate the slum dwellers to avail the benefits of the project by becoming the partner. This required a change in their "mindset". They are used to get free services (though late and limited). They had to be motivated to share the cost and own the project and get better services. NGO plays key role in this. AMC & NGO jointly addressed the community in the slums and could win their confidence to implement the project.

Outcomes and Impacts

At the end of December 2005, 28 slum communities covering 4,868 households benefiting 24,340 people had been successfully upgraded. Implementation work ongoing in 13 slum communities covering 3,835 households benefiting 19,175 people. The SNP programme as on December 2005, has reached 8,703 families, making a significant contribution in the lives of 43,515 people in 41 slum communities of Ahmedabad. As on December 2005, the community members have paid a total of US $ 3,01,600 to the AMC as their contribution towards the services, something never done by slum dwellers anywhere else in India. SNP programme of Ahmedabad city is an example of strong and substantial partnership among various stakeholders of the civil society who engaged themselves in providing better physical quality of life to its poor fellow citizens. It is also an excellent example of how, when a government body is willing to enter into strong, and meaningful partnerships, many elements of good governance such as Equity, Transparency, Accountability and Sustainability are actualised. Health and hygine interventions are carried out in all SNP slums that help families utilize health advisory and referral services to improve their quality of life. • Organised over 250+ training programs conducted separately for men, women, girls and boys for giving them basic health and hygine awareness • Organised over 110+ camps (General camps, TB camps and Eye camps) with the help of medical experts. • Distributed low cost generic medicines worth over INR 1,35,000 to poor patients. • 16,800+ children immunized in 41 SNP slums. • Generating awareness for TB and AIDS by conducting Role Plays in the slum communities. • Operation of 9 child care centres in the slum communities in partnership with Government's Integrated Child Care Development Scheme (ICDS) and other private contributions. Through these services the programme provides child care services to over 402 children. Additional 4 slums are linked to nearby child care centres benefiting 79+ children. • Insurance coverage to 5904+ individuals. Transparency • Monthly Monitoring Meeting: AMC as well as the NGO partners hold monthly meetings to review the progress of the work. The meetings provide a forum for all partners, including the community to share their views and facilitate the implementation of the programme. • Joint Planning: The layout plans of the design though prepared by AMC, are shared with the partners, and necessary amendments made. • Trainings: The AMC engineers jointly conduct trainings with MHT, to orient the community on the technical aspects to ensure community consent and support for smooth programme implementation. • Interaction with Public: The post lunch office hours of the AMC officials are allocated for open interaction with community and partners.

Sustainability and Scalability

SNP has sustained itself since its inception maintaining its partnership character. It has grown tremendously reaching 8,703 families, making a significant contribution in the lives of 43,515 people over 41 slum communities of Ahmedabad. The key elements that made this programme sustainable are: • Long

Term Commitment: The AMC has set up a separate cell for implementing the programme. The AMC provides the people a written assurance that they will not be evicted for 10 years if they join the scheme. Last instalment of Community contribution is released only after the work is completed to their satisfaction. • Community Involvement: Complete involvement of the slum dwellers at all the stages of the programme, is ensured by setting up neighbourhood groups which are duly registered by MHT and SAATH. The cost sharing by the community instills a sense of ownership in the slum dwellers. • Demand based innovations: Introduction of Demand Based Innovations, like inclusion of individual toilets in the programme by the SNP Cell. • Financial Viability: Following an amendment in the BPMC Act in 1978, the Corporation has been regularly spending upto 10% of funds from its own revenues towards improvement of services in the slums. So far the slums were being treated as a separate entry devoid of linkages with the city level services. SNP brings about complete transformation of the slum to integrate into the main stream of the society.

Gender and Social Inclusivity

The slum Improvement Partnership concept as experienced at 28 slums is fully replicable. Several other communities are now eager to join the project and transform their quality of life. Within next five years the physical improvement and the community development will be provided to 24,368 households benefiting 1,21,840 people in 120 slums of the Ahmedabad City. The Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC), another major city in the state of Gujarat has adopted the same concept for slum development and is upgrading the slum of Sonianagar on a pilot basis with increased community contribution from Rs. 2,100 per household to Rs. 3,100. Planning for next five years • 120 slum communities covering nearly 24,368 households identified for provision of physical infrastructure services under SNP. Way forward • Formulations of State Slum Policy in Consultation with all stake holders • Advise for a creation of Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) for scaling up of the Project.

Innovative Initiative

• The partnership concept for slum upgradation between various stakeholders such as AMC, NGOs, CBOs and the community worked. • The quality of life of the slum residents improved considerably. • In-situ upgrading of slums is the most appropriate response for tackling large-scale problems of slum dwellers and urban managers. • Investment in the provision of basic infrastructure and provision of land tenure automatically attracts shelter upgrading by the slum residents. • Slum dwellers are willing to contribute for the services and to pay taxes, contradictory to the belief that they are a pampered vote-bank and want everything free. • The role of slum dwellers as partners in the project rather than beneficiaries made them more responsive and inculcated a feeling of ownership in them. • Provision of individual facilities proved to be better (and cost-effective in the long-term) than shared facilities. There was an attitudinal change in the slum dwellers as it lead to the enhancement of their social status. • Provision of essential services alone is not enough, the softer interventions, through community development which bring about attitudinal changes in the slum residents are equally important. • Clear correlation between completion of physical work and community savings to meet individual contribution. • The market value of their house has increased due to the existence of the infrastructure services. • SNP is a transformation from: - physical degradation and lack of services to upgradation and basic infrastructure provision, -no dialogue between residents to informal settlements and the municipality to a participatory process of dialogue between them, - illegal to respectable, from dirty to clean, from disease to health, - a slum to a colony or society

Resources devoted to delivery

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