



A PRACTITIONER'S TOOLKIT

Making water, sanitation and hygiene safer through improved programming and services

Toolset 3-D

Community-managed latrine blocks

TS3-D-1 – Community-Municipal Corporation–NGO partnership for slum infrastructure improvement: Tiruchirappalli, India

Context	<p>Tiruchirappalli is a city in Tamil Nadu, India, with a population of around 720,000. Of this, 23 per cent live in 211 approved and 75 unapproved slums; 78 per cent have access to the city water supply and sanitation coverage is reported to be 70 per cent, with many households having latrines with septic tanks. There are 339 community toilets in the city, and as of 2008 around half of these were managed by the community.</p>
Implementing organisations	<p>Local women's groups, Women's Action for Village Empowerment (WAVE) Federation, Gramalaya, Tiruchirappalli City Corporation, WaterAid.</p>
Description of good practices	<p>This case study was not written specifically with regard to links between violence and WASH, but provides an example of women being involved in leadership and the management of community toilet and bathing blocks and being empowered to be able to approach government officials to address issues of sanitation and beyond. It therefore shows potential for women to be able to discuss and integrate considerations with respect to the safety of women, girls and others.</p> <p>In 2000, WaterAid began working with women in low-income communities in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu, to improve sanitation services, in collaboration with NGOs, the local municipality and the local community. Residents became active in renovating and managing toilets, and a large number of community toilets were handed over to the communities to be run by community management teams. In some cases, local NGOs even supported communities to build new complexes.</p> <p>Sanitation and hygiene education (SHE) teams and self-help groups were established, which were given the responsibility of selecting their own leaders and managing the bank accounts. The groups take turns to manage the toilets and each member has the responsibility of being the caretaker for the day. For the larger blocks there are two caretakers working on a shift basis per day and a watchwoman, along with a male and a female cleaner. They are paid wages commiserate with the size of the community and toilet complex. These groups decide the user fees, some of which are free for urination and use by the elderly, children and single women. All users who pay are given a token that is used to ensure transparency in finances.</p> <p>These toilets have special provisions for children and persons with disabilities, and some for hygienic disposal of menstrual waste. Any extra funds they receive are used to promote health and sanitation. A large number of these areas have now been declared 'open-defecation free'.</p>
Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A subsequent review of the maintenance of the toilet complexes in 2006 revealed that the complexes managed by women community members were better managed than the ones run by the municipality.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women were able to learn how to manage finances and gained confidence to be able to engage with government officials on issues of sanitation and beyond, and learned how to address family and community issues.
Lessons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In some areas there was political interference in the appointment of caretakers, and this sometimes meant that people would not pay for sanitation. Hence there was not enough income to cover the costs of the caretaker or for maintenance. • Some latrines were taken over by people for dealing and using drugs, which frightened people away. • There was refusal by people of different castes to share the facilities, while the sweeper communities (considered the lowest caste on the social ladder) lost livelihood opportunities with the council when the blocks were managed by the community management teams.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • After initial reluctance communities do pay to use toilets and services can be provided at an affordable cost, even for the poorest. • The programme provided an entry point for the empowerment of women.
References/Links	<p>Gramalaya and WaterAid, India (2008) <i>Tiruchirappalli Shows the Way; Community-Municipal Corporation-NGO Partnership for City-Wide Pro-Poor Slums' Infrastructure Improvement</i>. India: WaterAid, India. (on USB stick)</p>