

Dahod to make certain that no one is left behind



The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) of Dahod in Gujarat is determined to ensure that no one is left behind (NOLB) with regard to sanitation coverage. To cater to those who do not have toilets, it has commenced various activities such as building of individual household toilets as well as community toilets, the latter in public spaces so that all people have access to sanitation.

Dahod that had a mere 4.75% sanitation coverage as per the baseline survey of 2012 had constructed as many as 241655 toilets, before it was declared open defecation free (ODF) on 28th September, 2017.

LOB and NOLB: Over the past year, door to door surveys revealed that 42,277 households had been left out of the baseline survey (LOB) and 68241 households – new and other, did not have their own toilets. To address this, the district administration, with the help of Self Help Groups, carried out yet another house-to-house survey, in a conjoint manner. Construction of all the required number of toilets has been completed, according to Mr. Rachit Raj, District Development Officer.



Community toilets: Focus of the DRDA is now on community toilets which are being set up in common public spaces such bus stops, markets, bazaars and temples. As many as 108 community toilets are being built across the district. Each of them will have separate toilets – 2

for men and 2 for women; 3 urinals for men, a hand washing facility and a ramp to cater to persons with disability. Free for use by the general public, the toilets built a cost of Rs. 2 lakh each will be maintained by the Gram Panchayat in which they are located.

All the facilities will be ready by 31st March 2020, in compliance with the deadline set by the State.



ODF Sustainability: As far as ODF sustainability is concerned, the district administration has written to 1,59,867 beneficiaries, individually, about the benefits of using toilets, warning them about the ill effects of open defecation. Further, to help beneficiaries develop a sense of ownership, they were encouraged to participate in shramdaan in the process of toilet construction.

Adoption of Swachhgrahi Model: A total of 950 Swachhgrahis (front line workers) are currently active in the district. Appointed at block and panchayat levels, they have been regularly inspecting, monitoring, reviewing and ensuring access and usage of toilets. They have also made efforts to make the facilities disabled-friendly where required. It is with such grassroot workers who provide structural support and awareness, that the district intends to transform the sanitation situation of Dahod – to a place where open defecation is a thing of the past and the shame and diseases associated with the practice are totally eliminated.

ODF Plus: To ensure toilet usage, maintenance and general village cleanliness, morning follow-up is done occasionally in all villages, as also verification of toilets. Regular IEC activities are done to keep people aware of safe sanitation practices.

Further, special Gram Sabhas were held in all villages to make communities aware of the need to efficiently manage solid and liquid waste. This was followed by swachhata shramdaan and awareness generation across all 766 villages when schools and colleges participated.

Along with the rest of the country plastic waste management was a focus during the Gandhi Jayanthi celebration of 2019, when locations and logistics for plastic waste collection and segregation were identified. People were encouraged to replace their plastic bags with jute or cloth bags, of which mass production was undertaken. People of all villages also took the pledge for a plastic waste free India.

The campaign took on a festive atmosphere when rangoli on the theme of 'Plastic waste free India' were made. As many as 18,81 lakh people were mobilized for the campaign. They took part in 1567 activities and collected a whopping 26,062 kgs of plastic waste all of which was effectively disposed or sent for recycling.

