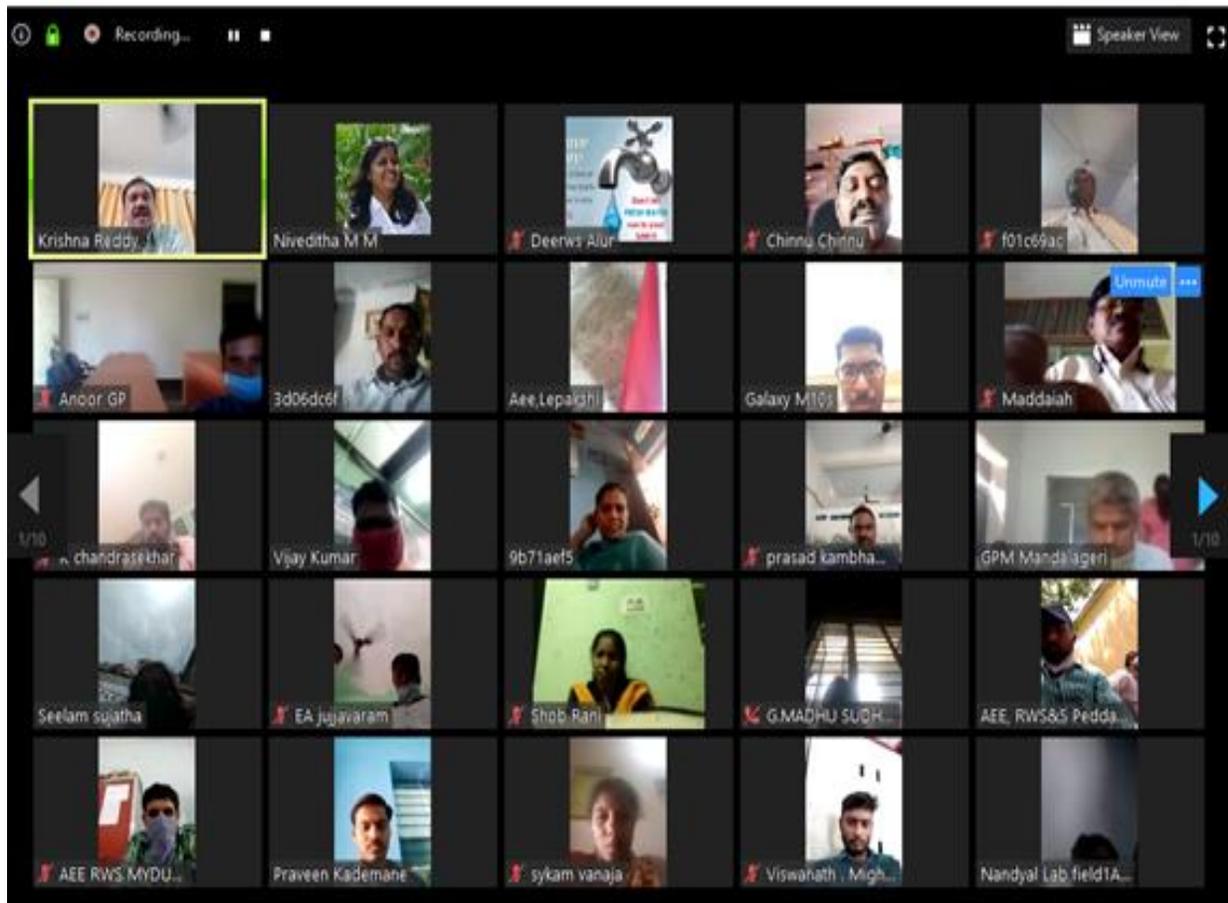


## Training on COVID-19 & WASH for SBM-G, RWS staff in AP



In the wake of the deadly Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, the impact of which is being felt across the country and globally, Andhra Pradesh had organized an online training on COVID-19 prevention and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) for professionals working with Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) and Rural Water Supply (RWS).

Organised by Swachh Andhra Corporation (SAC) and UNICEF, the online training was held on 7th and 8th May 2020.

**Objectives:** The main objectives of the online training were to strengthen the capacity of the State, District and GP functionaries working on SBM-G and RWS. They needed to be equipped to reach out to all rural households of the State to mitigate the challenges during the pandemic; and to create a healthier society and sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene community, State Mission Director, Dr. P. Sampath Kumar said.

**The need:** In line with communiques issued by the Government of India, AP had issued letters and circulars to districts for safety measures to be observed, procurement of Personal

Protection equipment (PPE), continuation of sanitation work, and activities to promote ODF sustainability. Nevertheless, there were some challenges which included:

- Reaching and creating awareness among communities in high risk villages
- Limited skills and knowledge among district teams, Gram Panchayat Volunteers/Swachhagrahis, Engineering Assistants, Green Ambassadors and GP members to create awareness among communities on COVID-19 prevention and WASH
- Inability of frontline workers to purchase PPE/kits (soaps, sanitizers, masks and gloves).
- Availability of adequate, qualitative and safe WASH facilities and services in the quarantine and Isolation wards/Villages/GPs/Public places

**Topics Covered:**

- Introduction to COVID-19, understanding COVID-19 and key facts and response
- Safe environmental sanitation and hygiene including use and safe disposal of PPE during COVID -19
- Key Health and WASH Behaviors: Key behaviors to be practiced by all to protect themselves and others; key behaviors to be practiced by suspected or confirmed cases to prevent the spread; dealing with stigma and communication
- Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders during COVID 19 with Action Plan

**Outcome:** As many as 1,107 participants from 13 districts including RWS Engineers, District Water and Sanitation Committee (DWSC) Consultants, National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP) Consultants, Lab Assistants were trained on COVID 19 response and WASH by UNICEF in four online sessions conducted by SAC and RWS, using the Zoom platform. Also, 1,250 SBM-G and RWS professionals, 60,000 GP/Village Secretariat functionaries and around 2.2 lakh Gram Panchayat volunteers, Green Ambassadors and Green Guards were trained on COVID-19 prevention and WASH.

Further, all rural households in AP were sensitized on preventive measures and the need to practice six key critical health and WASH behaviors during and after COVID-19. Even as knowledge and skill of all stakeholders at various levels has been increased, preventive measures have been initiated for WASH, Solid Waste Management, Grey Water management and Faecal Sludge and Septage Management in districts.