

## Sikkim commences training on Sujal and Swachh Gaon



In order to strengthen the capacity of Panchayat Raj Institutions to ensure that the sanitation gains achieved under Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G) are sustained, the Government of Sikkim has commenced training on Sujal and Swachh Gaon.

According to Mission Director, Sikkim, Mr. Anil Raj, the first 3-day residential training on Sujal and Swachh Gaon for sarpanches, teachers, panchayat secretaries and swachhagrahis was held in East Sikkim on 8th January, 2020. As many as 44 trainees attended the programme that covered 3 block administrative centres with 15 Gram Panchayat Units (GPUs).

The second batch comprising 50 participants commenced training on 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2020. By the end of the programme all GPUs would prepare an action plan to conduct ODF Plus activities. In due course similar training programmes will be held to cover all 185 GPUs of Sikkim.

Among the topics covered in the training programme were – sustaining ODF status; status and operational plan for solid and liquid waste management; grey water management and faecal sludge management; resource envelope for water and sanitation facilities; IEC for Sujal and Swachh Gaon; and App introduction.

Areas covered under JJM were - Importance of water and sanitation service delivery; Jal Jeevan Mission; drinking water availability and demand in the village; sustainability of ground water sources through various methods of rainwater harvesting; operation and maintenance of water supply scheme; essentials of water quality monitoring and surveillance.

This was followed by field visits to sites with successful initiatives in water and sanitation; sharing of learnings; community led action planning process for Sujal and Swachh Gaon; and action planning and presentation.

Resource persons of the training programme designed by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation were Block Development Officers, Assistant Engineers, and Field Facilitators from the pool trained by Primove earlier in September at the State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) Sikkim.

As per the Sujal and Swachh Gaon initiative, ODF communities are encouraged to take up an Open Defecation Free Plus (ODF Plus) agenda under four verticals namely, biodegradable waste management, plastic waste management, greywater management and faecal sludge management. It also includes improving access to safe and secure water supply through the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) Programme.

Success of these initiatives is directly linked to the capacity and motivation of Gram Panchayat (GP) level functionaries.