

## Sarpanches describe their SLWM initiatives in Sarpanch Samvad

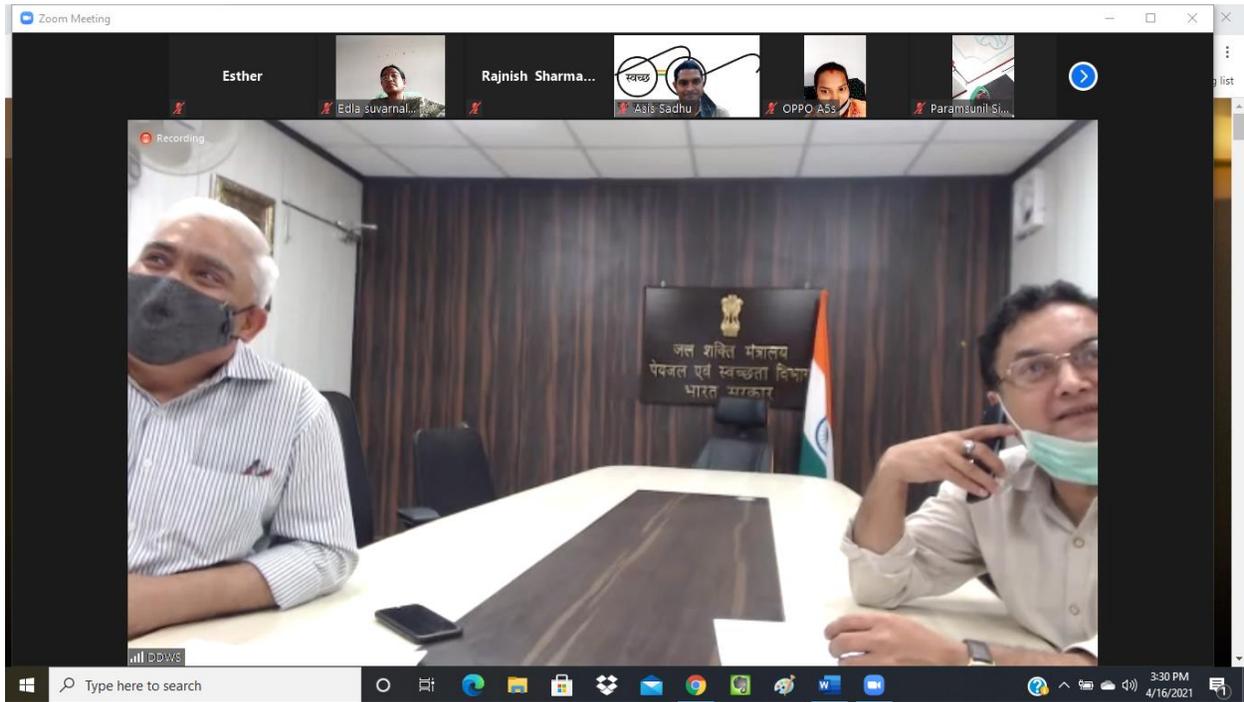


An old and polluted village pond that was a health risk to our community has been cleaned and renovated. The treated water is now being used for irrigation, with pipelines laid to carry water to the fields, explained Sarpanch Param Sunil Singh, adding that liquid waste management has been the focus in their village Dhianpur of Gurdaspur District in Punjab over the past year.

A ODF declared village, Dhianpur is now working its way to becoming ODF Plus which indicates that all its solid and liquid waste is managed efficiently, and visual cleanliness is maintained.

Sarpanch Singh was speaking at the weekly, virtual Sarpanch Samvad, organized by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti. The event provides a platform for Sarpanches to talk about their ODF Plus initiatives, innovations, and other areas of progress. Often, the village heads discuss their challenges and how they overcame them.

Sarpanches from the States of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand participated in this discussion.



Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Rajiv Jauhari, Deputy Secretary, DDWS congratulated the Sarpanches for their commendable work in solid and liquid waste management. He said the DDWS as also other village leaders was eager to learn from them innovations and best practices.



Offering his comments, Mr. Yugal Joshi, Director, SBM-G, DDWS encouraged them to continue with their best practices and document them by producing videos of their initiatives that can be shared with the rest of the country.

Meanwhile, a Sarpanch in Karimnagar, Telangana, Ms. Edla Suvarnala Suniyam explained their modus operandi which includes interpersonal and door to door communication to raise awareness on ODF Plus.

"We are continuously monitoring to ensure ODF sustainability in our village. Apart from this, we are also focusing on maintaining visual cleanliness and implementing SLWM practices," she added.

Ms. Draupadi Sahu, a Sarpanch of Rajnandgaon District in Chhattisgarh shared similar experiences, recounting how ODF sustainability is maintained with the help of Swachhata Didis and liquid waste through the construction of soak pits. The soak pits while preventing stagnation and overflow of wastewater help recharge ground water, she added.

Other Sarpanches that participated in the Sarpanch Samvad were - Shri Sanjay Nikhare Sarpanch, Gadchiroli (Maharashtra) who has done good work in Gobardhan and in the naxal area; Ms. Rekharani, Sarpanch, Baran (Rajasthan); Shri Jeevan Singh Rawat, Pradhan Uttarkashi (Uttarakhand), and Shri Prem Chand, Sarpanch, Hamirpur (Himachal Pradesh), all of whom had done good work in SLWM.