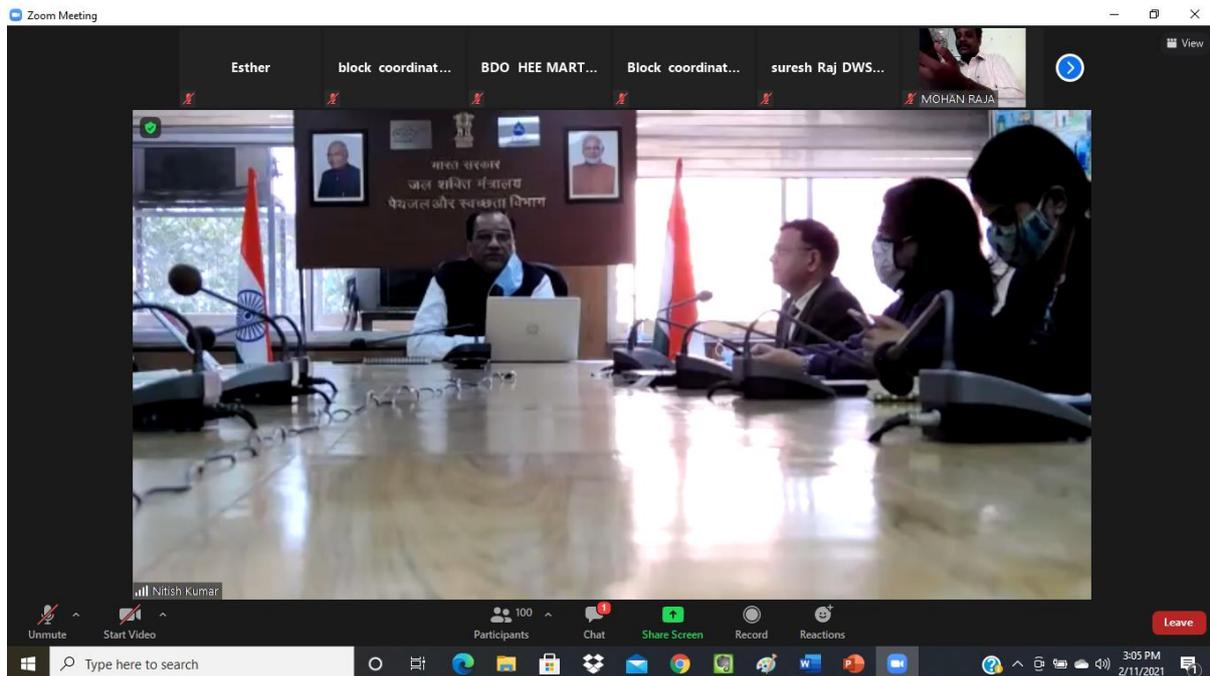


## Social media is a critical tool to convey SBM messages



“Social media has become a critical tool to reach out to everyone across geographies with our messages. The various platforms have been very effective during phase one of the programme and we should utilise it well during phase 2 as well,” - Shri Arun Baroka, Additional Secretary (AS), Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS), Ministry of Jal Shakti said.

The AS-DDWS was speaking at the IEC Social Media Workshop held on February 11, 2021. More than 300 IEC personnel from various States and Districts attended the workshop virtually.

Implementation of Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM) needs a higher degree of behaviour change and this can be achieved by communicating our messages effectively through social media. Short and impactful messages will undoubtedly make a difference,” he added.

While villages are working towards becoming ODF Plus, they need to fulfil the criteria set by the DDWS. However, each village has different requirements and thus becomes a project in itself, requiring appropriate messaging through mass media and social media. In this, using technology and tools of social media is a cost-effective way of communicating information.

In view of COVID restrictions easing, we need to take advantage of social media to increase content and the number of tweets to keep interest going and increase followers, the AS asserted.



In his introduction, Mr. Yugal Joshi, Director, DDWS highlighted how states and districts across the country can effectively and creatively disseminate information, share knowledge, and communicate the right message through social media platforms to achieve ODF Plus goals.

Expressing his hope that the workshop would energise the IEC teams across the States to leverage the power of social media to take forward the SBM-G campaign, he said, "Our messages on social media should be short and sweet. We need to share our knowledge with common people in a language they understand."

### **Representatives from Karnataka and Punjab presented the use of social media in their SBM-G campaign**

IEC team consisting of Ms. Vanajakshi and Mr. Manjunath from the Department of rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Karnataka provided an overview of their extensive use of Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Slideshare to convey messages.



From maintaining a social media calendar, creating ODF Plus themed creatives, utilising topical days to highlighting impact stories of beneficiaries and on-ground activities, the IEC team displayed how they are managing their social media channels.

To draw attention to certain issues, before and after images and impact stories are shared on social media. They attract followers and cross promote followers in an organic way, even as QR coded posters are made available to all districts.

Punjab highlighted the benefits of social media to spread the stories of swachhata champions and inspire behaviour change across communities.



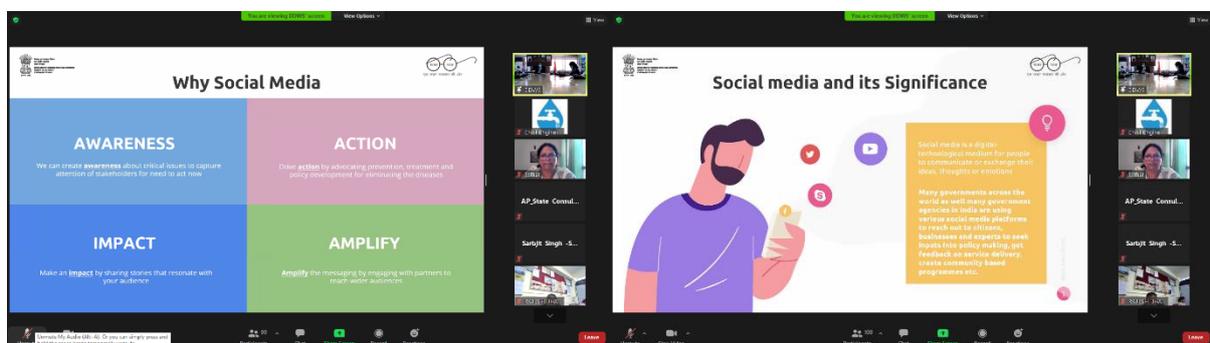
In his presentation, Mr. Sarbjit Singh, Sub Divisional Engineer (Sanitation), State SBM-G, Department of Water Supply and Sanitation, Punjab, discussed the strategies that the State is using to engage and train people on social media and encourage them to communicate relevant messages related to ODF Plus.

“Social media is the need of the hour. If content is fire, social media is the gasoline that drives content,” he said, explaining that the State has its presence on all the platforms including WordPress which they use as a tool to present their work, motivate village functionaries such as Sarpanchs and share best practices and success stories.

Punjab has also built the capacity of its personnel and their focus is on listening, engaging the audience and building relationships.

About the SBM-Gramin blog (<https://sbmgramin.wordpress.com/>) and the Sujal Swachh Sangraha knowledge portal (<http://sujal-swachhsangraha.gov.in/>), Ms. Esther Suhasini (consultant) provided an overview, encouraging district and state teams to contribute to writing blog stories and populating the knowledge portal with documents, videos, audios and presentations. This would be a great way to inform the rest of the country about what is happening in their districts/State, she said.

Thereafter, a representative of DDWS social media team made a detailed presentation on how to leverage social media handles for effective messaging. He talked about social media and its significance, its importance in building awareness, prompting action, amplifying an issue, and resulting in impact.



On the platform roles, creating impactful content, collaborating with partners, steps to creating a post and elements of a complete social media post, the social media representative spoke at length, throwing light on the use of taglines and hashtags and the need for design aesthetics.

As more and more districts are realising the importance of social media, he informed them of the best practices in capturing images and videos, how to increase tweet visibility. "Consistency is the key with regard to communication and content," he emphasised pointing to the do's and don'ts and how to measure performance on social media.

An active Question and Answer discussion followed that provided participants an opportunity to get their queries answered.

