

## What makes Patora a model ODF Plus village?



The entrance to each house in Patora GP of Durg District in Chhattisgarh has the name of the woman of the household painted on it, an indication that women are respected in the village and their opinion counts. In fact, it is the women in the village that can take credit for sustaining the ODF status as well as effective management of solid and liquid waste and visual cleanliness of the village.

Speaking with pride of the achievements made, young Sarpanch of the GP – Ms. Anajita Gopesh Sahu said that ever since she has taken charge as Sarpanch, 18 months ago, she and her team comprising Dhal Singh Sahu (Sachiv - GP Patora) have been keen to complete all unfinished projects pertaining to Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen (SBM-G). Additionally, the entire village community had taken oath to promote hygiene and sanitation in the village.

Incidentally, the GP receives royalty from various stone and mineral mining projects in the GP, which provides them with additional income which they have made good use of, for the development of the village with technical assistance from the State and other agencies such as UNICEF.

For starters, the GP which has a population of 4500 individuals from 850 households has installed Wi-Fi and CC TV in public spaces and is equipped with a meeting room and dispensers for hand sanitation. The waste dump yard has been recently converted into a children's park. Several walls of the building have IEC messages about safe sanitation and the need to maintain hygiene. Some walls also have alphabets and numbers painted on them that served as teaching aids for teachers during the covid lockdown when schools were shut.

**The GP has systems in place for:**

**Covid care:** The covid pandemic too was well managed in the village, although it had about 75 cases and 7 deaths. In the Panchayat Bhavan are oxygen cylinders, BP monitors, first aid kits and other paraphernalia that were lent to those who contracted the virus. The swachhagrahis played a critical role in this as they visited homes to inform people about covid care and prevention, and distributed posters and pamphlets. The ASHA workers on the other hand provided food kits and medicines.



**Barthan Bank:** In keeping with the directive of the NGT to ban SUP, as many as 3000 plates and glasses, and cooking utensils are available for lending to the community for functions, at a nominal charge. The only condition is that they should be returned to the Barthan bank in a clean condition.

**Menstrual Hygiene Management:** A 10-member SHG led by Smt. Maheswari Divang has started production of biodegradable sanitary pads with the help of Rs.50,000 awarded to the village from a World Bank rotation fund. The women have bought materials at wholesale rate and they sell the completed pads for Rs. 28 for a pack of 6. Thus far the SHG has earned a profit of Rs.84,000. Women and girls in the GP prefer to buy these pads which are affordable compared to other popular brands.

**Solid waste management:** Segregated waste is collected twice a week for which households pay Rs.60 per year while shops and establishments pay Rs. 100 per year. New

households pay Rs.500 as sanitation tax and swachhata workers are paid a monthly allowance from the collections. All waste is taken to the segregation shed where wet waste is converted into compost and used in the kitchen gardens and gardens of the panchayat ghar and non-biodegradable waste is sold to recyclers while single use plastic is sent to the cement factory.

**Community sanitary complex:** The GP has a CSC built at a cost of Rs.3.5 lakhs under SBM-G and it is also accessible to differently abled persons. Maintained by the GP, it is equipped with a sanitary pad vending machine and an incinerator.

**School sanitary pad vending machine:** The local school too has been fitted with a sanitary pad vending machine and an incinerator.

**Active SHG:** The SHG members are involved in multifarious activities including door to door collection of waste, interpersonal communication, promotion of Menstrual Hygiene Management, voluntary shramdaan to clean public spaces, slogan writing, classes on sanitation in schools and anganwadis on Saturdays and discussion on sanitation during Gram Sabhas.

**Soak pits:** Individual soak pits in homes and colourful community soak pits near public water pumps are common to soak up excess water and prevent stagnation or overflow onto the paths.

**Drainage system:** The DEWAT treatment unit set up by WaterAid prevents black and grey water from entering the pond. It has a filtration system comprising of a settling tank, treatment unit and collection chamber that filters all liquid waste before it enters the pond. Having gone through the system the quality of liquid that enters the pond is of permissible limit. Also, the stormwater drain has been fitted with filters to trap waste such as plastic and other solids. As a result of such interventions, the pond over the last few months has been clean. While most homes have the desirable twin pit toilets, some have septic tanks which are connected to leach pits to manage black water at household level.

**FSTP:** The planted drying bed model, which is the first rural FSTP in the state is capable of treating 9 kilo litres of faecal sludge per day from identified homes with septic tanks in a cluster of 5 villages. Faecal sludge is brought to the plant through a honey sucking vehicle owned by an urban body. Treatment process includes passing of faecal matter through a screening chamber, a planted drying bed, and a filtration unit with 3-4 layers of filtration before going into the polishing pond after which the water can be used for landscaping within the premises. The workers have been trained for safe and mechanized desludging.

**Gothan:** The GP has a Gothan that takes care of 50-100 cows which are fed fodder and water. A cow herd has been assigned to gather the cows in the mornings and return them to their owners in the evenings.