

## Women painters help sustain sanitation outcomes in MP



A walk through the Patangarh village in Karanjija Block of the tribal District of Dindori in Madhya Pradesh and one is bound to come upon brightly coloured walls bearing key sanitation messages. The wall paintings are the creation of women who depict scenes of clean villages, complete with toilets attached to every house and dustbins.

Around eleven thousand women had participated in *Lok Chitra Kala se Swachhata Samvaad* (A dialogue on sanitation through folk art) - a campaign conducted by the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen, a flagship programme implemented by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department of the Government of Madhya Pradesh.



The messages on the paintings were clear. They included various components that together portrayed a sanitation message. While doing so, the woman painter would engage the audience that invariably gathered around her. The dialogue that ensued featured the importance of safe hygienic behaviours and practices.

Most of the women that had been engaged to carry out this task were unskilled daily wage labourers. Under normal circumstances, they would earn about Rs. 3000-4000 per month and on occasion upto Rs. 6000 per month.

But under the *Lok Chitra Kala se Swachhata Samvaad* campaign, they would make Rs.1000 per painting, enabling them to earn more than 6000 per month. In the process they would take pride in the appreciation they received and in informing fellow residents about hygienic practices.

SBM-G had inspired many women to join this campaign. In fact, across the country, women had been at the forefront of the sanitation campaign.

Wall paintings are a great source of impactful messaging, their artwork long lasting and less expensive. Given this, Madhya Pradesh had galvanised a mass mobilisation by women volunteers.



**Objectives of *Lok Chitra Kala se Swachhata Samvaad* campaign:**

- Involvement of women and adolescent girls for ODF sustainability
- promotion of women’s empowerment and livelihoods through the innovative SBCC (social behaviour change campaign) for WASH behaviours
- to maximise awareness about hygienic behaviour practices depicted through local art.

**Messages conveyed through folk art:**

- Importance of using toilets by every member of the family
- Toilets promote good health
- Importance of washing hands during critical times
- Need to safely dispose of dry and wet waste

**Cooperation and convergence:** Even as Ajeevika Mission which is MP’s State wing of National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and SBM-G came on board to promote the mission, village level Federation of SHGs nominated women candidates, although preference was given to those with artistic abilities.

**Capacity building:** The women were then trained on themes and the basics of painting. SBM-G with support from UNICEF organised training at State level during which one district coordinator and 2 master trainers (one woman and one man) were trained, making a total of 781 master trainers at State and District level from 51 districts. Once the paintings they

developed were approved, 11217 women were selected from all districts and trained at 313 Block level trainings conducted by district level master painters.

Each woman painter was given the task to cover 2 Gram Panchayats – one in which she lived and the neighbouring GP. They were to do a minimum of 4 wall paintings in the headquarter village and 2 paintings in each of the smaller adopted villages of each GP.



The walls selected could be of schools, community centres, GPs offices or Anganwadi centres. Meanwhile, master trainers provided handholding support for 22 days – to ensure right messaging.

**Empowerment:** The women undoubtedly felt a sense of empowerment, free to express themselves while breaking the shackles of tradition that demanded that they stay at home or cover their faces. The campaign reached about 10 million people in rural communities and with the support of school children, every household came to know about key sanitation behaviours.

Across the state 26,000 swachhagrahis have been engaged to mobilise communities to put an end of open defecation. Further, as many as 2 lakh women SHG members participated in engaging dialogues on sanitation and hygienic practices.

Women painters who did exceptionally well were recognised and honoured at a State level function.



### Outcome:

- Engagement of 11217 rural women in 50228 villages

- 780 master trainers developed to paint sanitation messages
- One lakh wall-paintings were done through folk art
- Awareness was generated through dialogue with one crore rural people
- Enhanced livelihood and confidence of over 11,000 women