

WORKSHOP
REPORT ON
“SUSTAINABLE
CITIES INTEGRATED
APPROACH PILOT
PROJECT IN INDIA
(SCIAP)-
WORKSHOP FOR
GROUND
FUNCTIONARIES”

14-16 June 2022,
Vijayawada, Andhra
Pradesh, India

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Quick Overview

Date: 14th June – 16th June 2022

Venue: Press Club, Vijayawada

Number of Participants: 32 to 35

Number of Speakers: Six

Total Number of Sessions: 14 (excluding inaugural, feedback, revision and valedictory sessions)

Introduction

The Workshop titled “Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Pilot Project in India (SCIAP) - Workshop for Ground Functionaries” was conducted from 14th to 16th June 2022 at Press Club in Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, India.

Around 35 sanitation workers (frontline workers) attended the workshop from Vijayawada Municipal Corporation. Of this 35 participants, 21 were female staff working as Silt Workers in Drainage department and 14 were male staff working as Sewer Workers in Engineering department of Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC). The workshop registration details are attached in Annexure – 1: List of Ground Functionaries.

Details of Participants

Date	Number of female participants	Number of male participants	Total
14 th June 2022	16	16	32
15 th June 2022	19	15	34
16 th June 2022	21	14	35

The workshop began with a welcome note by Mr. Alladi Deva Kumar, Executive Secretary, Dalit Bahujan Resource Centre (DBRC), Guntur. At the end of the inaugural session, he introduced the DBRC team and shared briefly about DBRC’s role in creating awareness among marginalized communities. Next, all the DBRC resource persons introduced themselves; all the participants introduced themselves to the team and to other fellow participants.

Expectation Mapping

Mr. Alladi Deva Kumar asked the sanitation workers to express their expectations from the workshop. Some of the expectations of the participants were as following:

- Awareness about the government schemes available for them
- Grievance redressal mechanism i.e. procedure to find solutions to their problems.
- Safety precautions to be followed at workplace
- Leaves and other benefits they are entitled to.

Overall, the planned programme schedule was in line with the expectations of the participants. The schedule of the three days workshop was briefed to all the participants and all the participants were requested to be present on all three days of the workshop. Workshop schedule is enclosed in Annexure – 2: Workshop Schedule.



After the participants had communicated their expectations from the workshop, Mr. Alladi Deva Kumar gave a brief about the purpose of the workshop. The main objectives of the workshop were provided to the participants and the objective of each individual session/day was presented before the participants.

Day One: Enhancing Leadership for Frontline Workers to Create an Inclusive Workplace

Session-1: Importance of Self-Identification

Mr. Alladi Deva Kumar started the first session on “Importance of Self-Identification” by asking individual participants about the importance of their role in keeping the city clean. All the participants actively engaged in the discussion and few came forward and shared their role in keeping the city clean. However, most of the sanitation workers did not celebrate the role they play in keeping the city clean. When he started explaining the importance of sanitation workers role in maintaining the cleanliness of the city, they started to relate with the work more enthusiastically. He stressed the importance of sanitation work and said sanitation workers stand as the backbone of municipal work in the city. They are the essential force that help to keep the city clean, he added. Sanitation workers start their work at 5 am to ensure that all others could start their work normally from 9am onwards. Even though the work they do is very essential for proper functioning of everyday activities, those who are doing such activities are largely ignored by the society.

Mr. Alladi Deva Kumar with the help of group facilitators started the activity of group formation. Five different colour stickers were pasted on the back of all the participants by picking up colour stickers randomly. Then all the participants with same coloured stickers were formed into five different groups. This resulted in four ‘five’ member group and one ‘six’ member group¹.

Mr. Alladi Deva Kumar and the present group facilitators then asked each of the participant in each different group about the work they do. The details such as their name, their occupation, number of years they had been working as sanitation workers and their contribution to the life and wellbeing of life were noted down in five different coloured charts. Scanned images of all of the charts are attached in the Annexure – 3.

All of the women present there said that they work as ‘silt workers’ and their job is to clean ‘drainage nalas’. The male participants said that they work as ‘sewer workers’ and their job is to clean up septic tanks and sewage tanks. Male and female sanitation workers said if all of them do not perform their duties even for a day, the city will be in total chaos. The session was helpful to highlight the prominent role played by sanitation workers in keeping the city clean. In the same session, the female participants shared about the hardships they encounter on a daily basis at their

¹ On day one, total 32 participants were present for the workshop. However, for the morning session, only 26 members were present. The remaining six members joined the workshop from second session onwards.

workplace. Male participants discussed about the difficulties they face while cleaning the sewage from work sites.

At the end of the session, the master trainer stressed the prominence of wearing the uniform given to them by the sanitation department. All the participants vowed to wear aprons whenever they are at workplace.

Session-2: Awareness – building regarding various provisions and laws

Dr. G Umamaheswararao started the second session with the help of power-point-presentation translated in the regional language. Since the majority of the sanitation workers were non-literates, he read out aloud the important points of the power-point-presentation and thus the session went more in an interactive mode rather presentation mode.

In the beginning, he asked participants regarding the awareness about the benefits that they had been receiving from their employers. To this question, most of the sanitation workers, both male and female, said that they were not fully aware of the provision, Acts and schemes available for them. Dr. Umamaheswararao first clarified to the participant about who is considered as frontline



workers. Then, he went on to explain about Solid Waste Management Rules 2016. Under this rule, he informed the participants that their employer should give them an occupational identity card. Then he informed the participants about Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan Survekshan Guidelines, Occupational Safety Health Code 2020. When asked whether regular health checkups are conducted for them, most of the sanitation workers replied 'No'. Here master

trainer Dr. Umamaheswararao added and said to the participants that they have a right to get regular health checkups from their employers.

Then Dr. G Umamaheswararao talked about 'The Code on Social Security 2020' and highlighted the healthcare benefits that the sanitation workers are entitled. He clearly mentioned the sickness benefits and insurance benefits in case of workplace injuries and deaths. He then talked about 'The Occupational Safety Health Code 2020' which mandates provision of safety kits for all frontline workers at workplace. He said that it is the responsibility of the employer to provide clean drinking water, changing/rest rooms, and toilets for all genders.

Then he discussed about the scholarships available for children of sanitation workers, pension schemes, and provident fund facility available for the sanitation workers. Dr. Umamaheswararao then informed the participants that it is the responsibility of the employer to provide them training on any work related skill upgradation. He informed the sanitation workers about the housing and educational loans available for them. He asked the participants to get registered in e-shram portals to avail the partial disability coverage of Rs.1,00,000 and permanent disability coverage of Rs.200,000 for all frontline workers who are not covered under ESI.

Then Umamaheswararao discussed about the norms pertaining to the work of sanitation workers and clearly specified to them that it is the responsibility of the generators to segregate the waste. He informed the sanitation workers about the procedure to resolve grievances of sanitation workers and who to approach to raise a complaint to address their problems. At the end of this session, he

clearly informed the participants that it is the responsibility of the employer to provide all necessary safety gears for all the workers at workplace.

Session-3: Enhancing Communication Skills for Social Mobilisation and Community Engagement

This session began with playing the video stories of successful women working in other parts of the country. After each video was played, it was translated into the regional language immediately so that the participants could understand the contents of it. The main trainer translated the contents



of all the videos to the participants. In all, three videos were played to motivate the participants present at the workshop. Two local community mobilisers who had been working for the welfare of the sanitation workers in Vijayawada were also invited in this session to share their

experiences. Participants felt motivated to see one among them becoming a leader and solving the issues of the community.

Session-4: Gender Sensitization

To breakdown the traditional gender norms and stereotypes, a session on gender sensitization was carried out. In this session, video of female sanitation worker and a video of female worker engaged in the de-sludging operation was shown to all the participants at the workshop. Along with this, pictures of men engaged in cooking, and taking care of children were also shown to the participants. Both the trainers gave several examples about women outshining men in different occupations. This followed a brief discussion with the male and female participants. While the male participants expressed doubt about the abilities of women doing the 'risky' jobs, the female participants were happy to see some of the women breaking the gender roles and felt highly motivated. Some of the women expressed interest to become leaders at the end of this session. And few of the women said that most of the men feel jealous and may not be willing to work under women's leadership. Contradicting this view, majority of the men present there responded and said that they welcome woman leadership and do not have any kind of apprehensions to work under them.



Session-5: Stress Management

Stress management session was held to help the participants on how to deal with work related stress. The main trainer initially asked all the participants about what participants like to do in their free time. The trainer personally explained how he spends his free time to encourage other participants to share their opinion. Most of the male sanitation workers said that they spend their

free time by watching TV and smartphones. At workplace, the male workers said that they gossip with their fellow workers. Most of the female workers said that they usually do not get free time at home as they are engaged in daily household works and in taking care of their children. They further added that with this only they generally relieve their stress. And at workplace they said that they gossip with the fellow workers.

Day Two: Occupational Health and Safety of Ground Functionaries

The second day began briefly by recapping the activities and discussions conducted on the first day. The master trainer personally talked with the participants who did not attend the first day of the workshop and clearly explained them what had happened on the first day of the workshop.

Session-1: Familiarising with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Session one on day two began with Mr. Samuel Anil Kumar familiarising himself and PPEs with all the participants present at the workshop. Mr. Samuel Anil Kumar brought several PPE safety gears to show it to the participants. He then quizzed participants about each of the safety gear he brought. While majority of the participants could guess the name of the safety gear correctly, few of the safety gears were very new to them. Women female workers said that they do not use most of the safety gears that are shown to them and they just use masks, apron and hand gloves. The male workers said that they also do not use most of the safety gears either because they are not given to them or because it is difficult to work by wearing them.

Some of the participants were randomly invited by the master trainer to touch and feel some of the safety gears. While showing each safety gear to the participants, Mr. Samuel Anil Kumar asked the participants about the use of it. To this question, most of the male participants were able to answer correctly. Few women participants could not identify some of the exhibits shown to them. When asked sanitation workers would they like to wear safety gears if municipal authorities provide it to them, almost all said that they will use it.

Session-2: Introduction and Group Building:

The session was based on a couple of activities. The master trainer Mr. Samuel Anil Kumar asked five men and five women from the participants to volunteer for a task. The task was about to find out leadership and coordination qualities in a group setting. Ten streaks of thread tied to a single stick were given to ten different volunteers. All the volunteers were asked not to move from the places assigned to them and were asked to stand in a circle.



At the center of the circle, an empty water bottle with an open lid was placed. The volunteers' task was to push the stick into the bottle placed at the center with the help of threads tied to the stick that were handed over to each volunteer. And they had to do this task without moving from the places they were standing either by loosening and tightening the threads given to them. Five minutes of time was given for the volunteers to finish the task. And within a couple of minutes, the volunteers present there were able to push the stick inside the bottle. All the other participants along with the volunteers clapped at this achievement. Mr. Samuel Anil Kumar then explained how this task was successfully accomplished within a short span of time. He credited this to the coordination work of the volunteers and the leadership role of a couple of

volunteers present there. The participants realized the importance of coordination in a group task and promised to coordinate with the fellow workers at workplace.

Then the master trainer placed pictures of five different fruits in two bowls and asked each participant to pick picture of a fruit from the bowl. Participants who got same picture of a fruit were grouped together. This resulted in four seven-member groups and one six-member group. All the participants were then asked to share name and occupation with fellow group members to get familiarize with each other's work.

Session-3: Understanding Why Workers Do Not Like to use PPE

The session began with Dr. B Ramanamurthi, the master trainer for the session, showing each of the PPE gears to the participants asking them what they are and why they are used for. He then asked the participants the difficulties, if there are any, in wearing the safety gears given to them. To this question, majority of the participants said that they do not get sufficient safety equipment in the first place. The master trainer modified the question and asked the workers if they have any issues with the safety gears that are given to them. The women workers said that they are given hand gloves, masks and florescent aprons. And they said that do often wear the safety gears without fail. However, a few female workers said that wearing hand gloves makes their task a bit difficult and hence they usually avoid wearing it. They said that they are more comfortable performing their tasks with bare hands. Male workers also expressed similar opinion and said that the safety gears given to them cause hindrance while they are working. A few of the male workers added that the safety gears such as hand gloves and gumboots are not sturdy enough and often gets teared off after first or second use.

Master trainer then asked sanitation workers what would happen to them if they do not wear safety gears and perform their tasks at workplace. To this, some said that they might get skin allergies if they do not use safety gears. Few others said that they might catch fever and get sick if they do not use safety kits while doing their work. When asked whether they are willing to tolerate little discomfort for better health in the long term, almost all the participants said yes. The master trainer then compared the risks and benefits of wearing the safety gears.



Session-4: Informing Workers about the Usage of PPE

The session began with the master trainer asking the participants to list out the general health issues the sanitation workers usually encounter because of their work. Then he added some more health conditions, which the workers did not mention. Cuts, constipation, breathing issues, headaches, back pain, leg pains and skin allergies were the main health problems the sanitation

workers listed. Then the master trainer explained the participants different type of hazards that workers are likely to get exposed at their workplace.

With the help of the power-point-presentation translated into regional language Telugu, the master trainer showed some images of sanitation workers injured at the workplace due to non-usage of PPEs. To some of the images shown in the presentation, the sanitation workers were able to relate.

A few of them said that even they and their friends have had similar kind of injuries in the past. When asked whether anyone of them or their acquaintances at the workplace was injured in the past by snake or other animal bites, all of them replied a straight 'no'. However, they said that they do occasionally see rats and snakes while they are at work. The master trainer then asked the participants do they know where is the local PHC (Primary Health Centre) in the locality which they are working in. Many of the participants said that they know the exact location of the PHC near their workplace. However, they said that they do not have any contact number of the medical staff working there. Master trainer asked them to make a note of the contact number of medical staff working in the nearby PHCs to their work or residing places and spread the number among their fellow workers. To this, the participants send that they will get the number. Then master trainer explained about the first aid procedures to be followed in case of injuries. The master trainer explained about the benefits of wearing safety gears to all the participants.

The master trainer then showed the participant a short video on how to properly wash their hands using a home based soap. He invited a participant to volunteer for demonstrating how to properly wash hands with a soap. Finally, realizing the risks involved in working with bare hands,



participants assured the speaker to wear all the safety gears if they are provided to them.

Session-5: Retrospection and Winding Up

In the final session on second day, the main trainer summarized the topics discussed on the day and interacted with the participants. Participants raised some doubts during this session and the speakers patiently answered their queries.

Day Three: Social Security Provisions and Schemes for Ground Functionaries

The third day also began briefly by recapping the activities and discussions conducted on the second day. Couple of participants who missed out the first two days of workshop were personally briefed about what all happened on day one and day two.

Session One: Introduction to Social Security

The first session began with the main speaker Dr. B Ramanamurthi quizzing the participants about what they understand by the word social security. To this, most of the participants replied that they do not have a clear understanding of social security provisions available for them. A few of them said that social security means pension and provident fund.

Then the master trainer conducted a small quiz with the participants. He started with the question "Is COVID 19 vaccination an extension of social security? If yes, why? If not, why?" To this question, some said providing vaccine to workers falls under social security. When the trainer further probed why the participants feel so, they said that it is the responsibility of their employers to take care of their health. However, most of the participants felt vaccination as not to be part of social security scheme. To all such participants, the trainer explained that government, employer and employee, all three are responsible and should make a contribution to social security.



When asked whether providing occupational safety gears is an extension of social security, all the participants said unanimously ‘yes’. Even though they said ‘yes’, they expressed doubt whether their employers will provide them all the necessary safety gears. When asked whether ration (subsidized food grains) given through public distribution system is a part of social security or not, few said that it falls under social security. However, many felt that it is not part of

social security provided by the employer. The master trainer then gave an example case of Bengaluru and Mysore municipal corporations where sanitation workers are provided mid-day meals and clearly specified the case to be counted as social security. This was helpful for sanitation workers to differentiate between public distribution system and social security provided by the employer. When asked was it mandatory for their employers to organise health camps for them on a regular basis, many of the sanitation workers said yes. Few sanitation workers shared their experiences of being part of such medical camps held in the past. Sanitation workers felt that all such medical camps were little to no use and pointed out that doctors behaved very rudely with them.

When asked the question “Is skill up-gradation counted as social security?”, only few workers think that it is the responsibility of their employer to provide skill up-gradation training for them as a part of social security. Finally, when the master trainer asked “Is housing part of social security?” the participants nodded yes to this question. However, when asked do they receive any rent allowance for the work they do, many said that they are not aware of any rent allowance. Mrs. Yasodhara assuring to answer the questions asked in the session in next session, ended the session.



Session Two: Quiz on Social Security Programmes

The entire session was a quiz session where the master trainer asked a series of questions to the participants and those who gave right answers were rewarded with claps by the everyone present there. First Mrs.

Yasodhara asked the participants to name three social security the participants know. One male participant replied ESI, PF and pension. All the members present their clapped afterwards. Then she asked about the key benefits of ESI. To which, some participants said that they do make use of ESI card to get treatment from nearby government and private hospitals, while others said that they do not use it. When asked are they aware that they can take loan from their provident fund (EPF) money, all the participants said that they are not at all aware of this and often borrow money from money lenders when they are in dire needs. To the question, ‘which government agency provides loans for up-grading the work of the sanitation workers; one participant was able to answer the question and named vaguely it as Safai Karamcharis Corporation. Master trainer corrected it to National Safai Karamcharis Finance & Development Corporation (NSKFDC). To the next question ‘Who is responsible for the provisioning of occupational safety gear?’ none said

that it was their employer responsibility. For the question, ‘What all documents are required for enrolling in social security programmes?’ Aadhar card, employee card, PAN card and bank account number were the main details the participants replied. Mrs. Yasodhara added mobile number to the list, which all the participants forgot to reply. Finally, Mrs. Yasodhara stressed about the need to maintain standard name across all official documents and clearly explained about the difficulties in having different names on different cards.

Session Three: Snapshot of Social Security Schemes

The third session on day three was on providing a snapshot of social security schemes to sanitation workers at national and state level. Master trainer shared the details about different social security schemes through a power-point presentation translated in the local language. She provided a short summary of schemes such as insurance, pension, savings, credit facility, training, health checkups and occupational safety gears.



Session Four: Application Process of Social Security Programmes

In the session, master trainer explained about application process for different social security schemes available for frontline workers. All the participants present there were divided in five groups with each group having seven members. With the help of group facilitators, master trainer clearly explained the procedure to apply for various

social security schemes.

Reflections/learnings of the Training team on the Three Days Workshop

1. Participants said that most of the NGOs or government officials give them PPEs only to click a photograph. Afterwards, they say, the officials take the same PPE gears and give it to other sanitation worker to click another photograph.
2. The workers said that they are scared to request or complain about their problems to higher authorities fearing losing of their jobs. They are scared to complain about any shortcomings to avoid becoming a target to the higher authorities.
3. To address the above, there needs to be an anonymous procedure to capture the needs/complaints of the sanitation workers by strictly maintaining their anonymity.
4. Majority of the sanitation workers are more than willing to wear the safety PPE given to them. Albeit, the problem lies with the availability and quality of the PPEs given to them.
5. Some workers feel that safety gears given to them are of poor quality and are thus not at all useful for them.
6. All the workers said that they do not have proper place to sit and have their food during break hours and are forced to sit in front of houses of people close to their workplaces. This depends entirely on the generosity of the individual house owners. They want the governments and their employers to provide them place to eat and take rest during their break time.
7. Almost all the participants said that they do not want their children to become sanitation workers and for this sole reason, they said that they have been sending their children to good schools even though it is beyond their reach.

- Sanitation workers are extremely unhappy with the way doctors behave with them during the occasional medical camps. The doctors, they say, give them general medicine even without touching them.



Feedback and Analysis

Two types of feedback was taken from the participants

1. A written feedback form with questions and options to choose from. The trainers read questions for non-literate participants aloud and recorded their options. The scanned copies of the feedback are attached in annexure – 4.
2. A collective video feedback with the questions read aloud to all the participants.



Photographs and Videos

- Main or important events/lectures/activities were photographed and are attached in a separate folder.
- Videos of individual testimonials of some participants were recorded
- Video of collective feedback of the participants on the effectiveness of workshop was recorded.

Annexures

Annexure – 1: List of ground functionaries

Annexure – 2: Workshop Schedule

Annexure – 3: Scanned images of charts mentioning contribution of the work of sanitation workers to the life and wellbeing of the city

Annexure – 4: Participants' Response to feedback questions

Annexure – 5: Video testimonials of participants

Annexure – 6: Collective feedback of the participants on the effectiveness of workshop

Annexure – 7: Selected video clippings taken at the workshop

Annexure – 8: Selected images taken at the workshop