



The Mahad Story: Making of an Open Defecation Free City

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Mahad, a small Council with a population of 27, 531 people in the Raigad district of Maharashtra, has made conscious efforts to attain and successfully sustain an open defecation free status since the 1980s. The city has managed to achieve this through a combination of imaginative leadership, creation of an extensive toilet infrastructure including well-maintained community toilets, use of social awareness and effective monitoring.

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Further, based on the analysis of the Census 2011 information and the annual data collated under the PAS Project, the PAS team has shortlisted around a dozen cities in Maharashtra, which are potentially free of open defecation. The PAS team has strong intentions of following up and documenting these cases, which could show the way to other cities to achieve open defecation free status.

Padma Desai
Utkarsha Kavadi

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Disclaimer

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Introduction

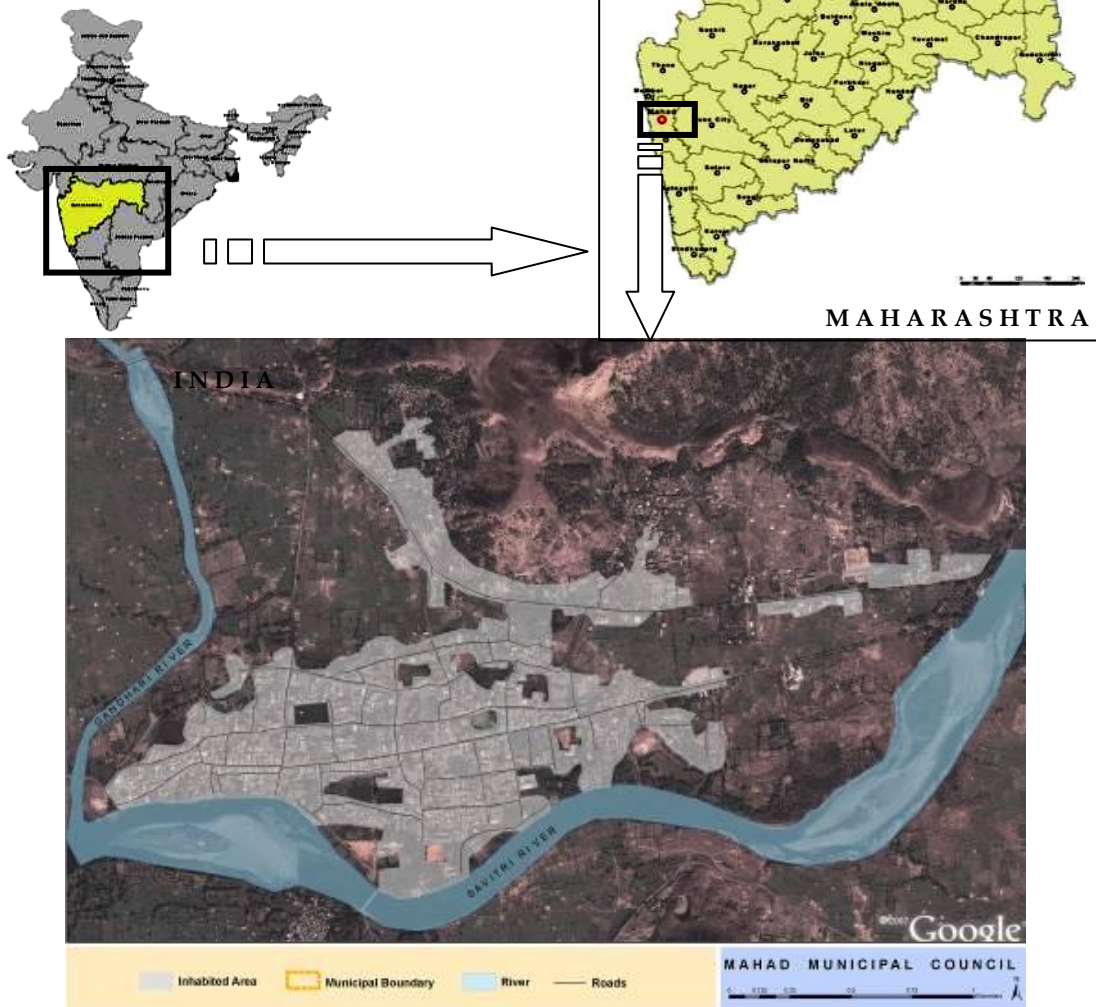
The 'Performance Assessment System', or PAS is a five-year action research project initiated by the Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT) University, Ahmedabad, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It supports the development of appropriate tools and methods to measure monitor and improve delivery of urban water and sanitation services in the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The PAS Project comprises three components: performance measurement, monitoring and improvement.

As a part of the PAS Project, the data submitted by urban local bodies (ULBs) is

validated through field visits. During these visits, the PAS team also documents good practices. One such case is that of Mahad, a small city in Maharashtra.

Under the visionary leadership of the Council President, Mahad has undertaken a number of proactive steps to achieve an open defecation free (ODF) status. These included using social pressure, creating an exhaustive and well-maintained toilet infrastructure to deter open defecation and an ongoing monitoring system. This document traces the journey of Mahad towards becoming an open defecation free city.

Figure 1: Location of Mahad



Mahad: A City Profile

Situated in the Raigad district of the Konkan region, Mahad is in the state of Maharashtra. It is about 175 km south of Mumbai. Located on the banks of two rivers, Savitri and Gandhari, and surrounded by the Sahyadri mountain range, it is famous for its pleasant climate and scenic beauty.

It has a long Buddhist and Maratha history. After the Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji established Raigad Fort as his capital, Mahad, about 30 km away, emerged as a vibrant market place. Traders of this small hamlet started supplying goods to the Fort.¹ In fact, the name 'Mahad' appears to have originated from 'Maha-Haat' – a large market place. There are historical records tracing the religious importance of Mahad's many temples during Maratha rule.

As far back as 1840, the first Marathi school in Raigad district was set up in this town. In 1874, the citizens of Mahad came together to establish a public library followed by a public hospital in 1887.² It also has an illustrious association with Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, who undertook a successful 'Water Satyagraha' on March 20, 1927, to highlight the denial of water to the Dalits of the city from the Chavder Lake.³ This incident gained historic significance giving rise to a National Memorial in this city. Mahad is well known for its active involvement in the freedom struggle of India.

Mahad Municipal Council

The Mahad Municipal Council (MMC), established on August 15, 1866, is the oldest Council in Raigad district. Currently, it is a class 'C' Municipal Council, spread over an area of 4.07 sq km. As per the recent Census of 2011, it has a population of 27,531 with 5,287 households and a density of about 7,561 persons per sq km. The city is divided into 17 wards, with an elected representative for each ward. The total number of Municipal staff members is 139 (Table 1). Mahad claims to be a completely slum-free city.

Table 1: Profile of Mahad Municipal Council

District	Raigad
Area (in km)	4.07
Total city population (Census 2011, provisional)	27,531
Total city population (Census 2001)	24,276
Total households (Census 2011, provisional)	6,369
Total households (Census 2001)	5,287
Density (persons per sq km)	7,561
Total number of slum settlements	0
Total number of electoral wards	17
Total number of municipal staff members	139
Annual budget (2012) (Rs in million)	8.9

Source: Mahad Municipal Council.

¹ Mahad Municipal Council. Detailed Description, 'Savistar Tippani'. Undated.

² Ibid.

³ See: mahadelection.org.

Service levels in Mahad

A total of 3.6 million litres per day (MLD) of water is produced in the city. The water distribution network covers the entire city. There are 3,946 water connections suggesting a household coverage of 62 per cent. There is no underground sewerage network and the entire city's wastewater is connected to open drains, a network which is about 4.5 sq km long. A unique feature of Mahad is in its toilet coverage. According to the data collection rounds of

Mahad: Discovering an open defecation free city

Observing the very high percentage of toilet coverage in Mahad reported by the urban local body (ULB), the PAS team undertook a validation exercise to establish data reliability and assess the local situation. The close to 99 per cent coverage potentially made Mahad an ODF city. A series of discussions were held with MMC officials to corroborate data authenticity. MMC officials, in turn, displayed a high level of confidence in the

PAS, the percentage of households with individual toilets stands at 64 and those with access to community toilets at 35. This implies that about 99 per cent of households have access to either individual or community toilets. This high percentage of toilet coverage suggests that Mahad is likely to be an Open Defecation Free (ODF) city.

status of Mahad being ODF. Following this, a team from the PAS Project visited the city. The team identified a number of locations that are generally found to be susceptible to open defecation, such as: unattended or residual open spaces, areas surrounding community toilets, along open sewers or river banks, relatively unfrequented locations on the outskirts of the city, and the dumping grounds of city waste (see photographs below).



Well maintained open spaces in Mahad which are free of open defecation.

The team undertook a number of early morning visits to these locations. During these repeated visits, not a single resident was found to be defecating in the open. The city has 59 community toilet blocks. Site visits to community toilets revealed reasonably well maintained infrastructure. Discussions with municipal officials pointed to the fact that at various junctures the Council had responded to the lack of toilets for its population and tried to bridge the gap. Similarly, during

informal conversations, town residents stressed their reluctance to engage in open defecation.

It was clear from the Validation Exercise that Mahad was a town that had indeed achieved an ODF status. This reflected the persistent efforts undertaken over a long period of time. What follows is this journey of Mahad towards becoming an ODF city.



Discussions with Mahad residents and the Chief Officer of the MMC during the Validation Exercise.



Discussions with the President of the MMC.

The ODF Initiative in Mahad: The Early Process

The process of making Mahad an ODF city started in the early 1980s – much before the emergence of a global focus on

Creating social pressure

The foundation for making Mahad ODF was laid in the early 1980s by the then President of the Council, Mr S.S. Sawant, who was a well respected advocate. He had observed that defecating in the open was a widely prevalent practice amongst the town's residents. He then initiated a campaign to educate and convince the residents to discontinue this practice. Handbills were distributed from time to time explaining its ill effects and exhorting the people to use community toilets. This had a limited impact and people continued to defecate in the open.

He realised that it was necessary to employ other means of dissuading residents. Thus, as a parallel strategy, the President and the MMC officials undertook rounds of the city very early in the morning (4.30 am to 8 am) and took photographs of those found defecating in the open. These photographs were then published in the local newspapers. Those who continued despite this 'expose' and repeated warnings were fined. Not

Creating an infrastructure of community toilets

During this duration, it was also observed that in some areas citizens resorted to open defecation not out of choice but compulsion as they did not have any individual toilets and there were no community toilets near their residence. To mitigate this, the MMC identified

ODF cities. The lead was taken by local leaders and included both social measures and provision of physical infrastructure.

stopping at that, the Council took severe action against stubborn offenders and filed cases in the Mahad Civil Court against them.

From time to time, the MMC Sanitary Inspector continued with these morning vigilance rounds, thus creating constant pressure on the citizens. Exposing the errant individuals by publishing their photographs also attached social stigma and shame to this practice. As a parallel activity, in 1982, the MMC converted all dry pit latrines to pour flush latrines and put an end to manual scavenging.

Mr Sawant led the Mahad Council from 1985 to 1996 and then again from 2001 till 2006. Under his uninterrupted 11-year tenure, the MMC accorded a high priority to stopping open defecation and all efforts towards this goal continued unabated. Council presidents who succeeded him in the intervening period (1997–2000) maintained this focus and strategy.

locations closest to the communities that lacked such access and constructed new community toilets using its own funds. Initially, these were built on government land. However, this was not always possible as often the identified locations were on private land.

Toilets on private land – An unusual arrangement: Over the years, the MMC has built many community toilets on private lands. For this, an unusual strategy was employed. Mr Sawant personally went to the landowners to request them to construct community toilet blocks on their land. In a series of meetings, he persuaded them to grant permission to the Council. Once convinced, each private landowner gave a 'Permission Letter (Sammati Patra)' and a 'No Objection Certificate (NOC)' to the MMC. What is noteworthy here is that there was no incentive or compensation granted to the landowner for surrendering part of the land. Moreover, there was no apparent guarantee that this land would be returned to the owner in the future if so desired by him/her. Despite this,

Child-friendly arrangements: In some cases, it was observed that children accompanying adults continued defecating in the open as the community toilets were not child friendly. To circumvent this, the MMC constructed small, open footpaths adjoining these

Legislative provision for providing toilets: In the 1980s, it was made mandatory for all new residential

landowners seem to have willingly surrendered the required portion of their land for community toilets. As recalled by Council officials, "Mr Sawant's untiring efforts were there for us all to see. His personal conduct was also exemplary. In this background, when he approached private landowners with requests, they too felt part of a larger initiative. Few resisted. Why only for toilets, there were cases in which landowners freely gave out small portions of land for road construction under the Development Plan."

Due to this special arrangement between the MMC and private landowners, a wide network of community toilets could be created, mostly on the outskirts of the city.

blocks. These were about 5 feet wide with an open gutter, which was joined to the septic tank. The footpath was cleaned daily by the conservancy staff. Children found this far more agreeable. Gradually, they too started using the community toilets.

properties to construct individual toilets on their premises in order to be granted building permission.

Persistent Efforts Continue

The efforts initiated in the 1980s to make the city ODF continued in Mahad over the next two decades. In 2007 this gained

The 2007 'Toilet Survey' of individual and community toilets

Regular vigilance, exposing errant individuals and, thus, bringing about social pressure continued from time to time. However, not stopping at that, the MMC took another proactive decision – to conduct a comprehensive 'Toilet Survey' in 2007. For enumerating individual toilets,

further momentum with a toilet survey, followed by measures to strengthen the toilet infrastructure.

the city was divided into two zones and two separate registers were kept for them. Detailed information on property number, name of owner, type of toilet, septic tank/others, disposal of waste (municipal drains, soak pit) and type of toilet (individual/community) was gathered (Table 2). This entire exercise was carried out by the staff of the MMC.

Table 2: Survey of individual toilets

Sr no	Property no	Owner's name	Type of toilet		Disposal of wastewater		Type of toilet	
			शौचालय	अन्य	शौचालय	अन्य	शौचालय	अन्य
1	20/1	शारद विनायक सुर्वे	१					
2	20/2	महादेवजी बाबुसा वीरव	१					
3		सुनील शंकरराव शिंदेकर	१					
4	१५५/१	सोपे चंद्रकांत वर्दे	१		१			
5	१५५/२	सिद्धांत उतेकर	१		१			
6	११२	सुनील सुधाकर सुराणे	१		१			
7	१३	सुनील वर्डे नरु साठवी	१		१			
8		भाऊ मनोहर साठवी	१		१			१
9	५४/५	विनायक लक्ष्मण कांबळे	१		१			
10	१३	नागेश कान्हे साठवी	१		१			
11		विनीत शंकर साठवी	१		१			
12	१५	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
13		सुनील चंद्रकांत पवार	१		१			
14		सुनील साठवी साठवी	१		१			
15	१२	सिद्धांत शंकर साठवी	१		१			
16	१०	सुनील देवू कासार	१		१			
17	१३/१	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
18	१३/२	विनायक शंकर साठवी	१		१			
19	३१/३५	सुनील काठाराम साठवी	१		१			
20	०/८	शंकर काठाराम साठवी	१		१			
21	१०/१	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
22	१८/१	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
23	१८/२	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
24	२०	सुनील सुधाकर साठवी	१		१			
25	२१	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
26	२२	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
27	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
28	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
29	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
30	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
31	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
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40	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
41	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
42	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
43	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
44	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
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49	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
50	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
51	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
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58	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
59	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
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75	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
76	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
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96	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
97	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
98	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
99	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			
100	१८	सुनील शंकर साठवी	१		१			

Similarly, an extensive survey of community toilets vis-à-vis their availability and present condition was undertaken. The survey included detailed information on location, total number of blocks, number of seats available (male and female), land ownership pattern (government, municipal council, private),

and type of toilet. As per the categories outlined by the MMC, an inventory of community (public), shared as well as pay-and-use toilets in the city was made. A qualitative assessment of their physical condition was also done.

Table 3: Community toilets in Mahad

Sr no	Area/place	No of blocks	No of seats			Type of land	Type of toilet	Remarks
①	②	③	④			⑤	⑥	⑦
SN	Area / place	No. of Block	Male	Female	Urinals	Type of Land (Public/private)	Type of toilet (Community / Shared / PAT & Use/other)	Remark
1	उदरनाका	3				Govt. Land	Share Toilet	6 Seats
2	हापुसतडे मळगिद जवडे	1	3	3	-	Govt. land	Public	
3	कोटअडि	2	3	3	-	Mun. Land	Public	
4	काजडपुरा तमशि कावी.	3	4	5	-	Govt. Land	Public	
5	खाईवडा नाका	1	2	2	3	Mun. Land	Public	
6	कपेअडि	1	2	2	-	Private land	Public	संमती पत्राने जमण ताब्यात रि
7	खोलेआडि	1	4	-	-	Mun. Land	-	
8	राजकी शाळ महाराज समाजमंदीर	1	-	4	-	-	-	
9	मठआडि	1	2	3	-	-	-	
10	नगर परिषद कार्यालय	2	1	2	3	-	Municipal Toilet	
11	चवदातेरे आळीकर		जमण	जमण		-		SEATS 6 block
12	भाजी मंडई श्माल त.म. प.म.	1	2	3	2	Municipal land	Public	
13	मकीज भाजी मार्केट	1	4	4	4	-	-	
14	रु. अर्जुन मोई मार्ग	1	1	2	3	-	-	
15	मुण्यमोडु अदिनादेवी	1	जमण	जमण	3	-	-	2 SEATS
16	होळकर कामजमंदीर							
17	मच्छी मार्केट	1	2	2	4	-	Public	
18	मोईघाट	1	3	3	-	-	-	
19	बुंकाआडि	1	3	3	-	Private land	-	संमती पत्राने जमण ताब्यात
20	वेनाडआवाड	1	3	3	-	-	-	
21	वेनाडआवाड (श्रीधरराज चौधरी चाराजवडे)	1	3	3	-	Municipal land	-	
22	प्रा. शाळा रु. 2 जवडे	1	2	3	-	-	-	
23	जिजापाना उद्यान	1	4	4	3 Urinals 2 Berth	-	Pay and use	Pay use
24	हुनासा शाळा	1	1 (जमण)	-	-	-	Public	
25	घरकर आवाड	1	4	4	-	-	Public	
26	वल्लुटी नाका	1	2	3	-	Private land	-	संमती पत्राने जमण ताब्यात
27	नातेखिंड (मकीज)	1	3	3	-	Municipal land	-	
28	नातेखिंड	1	2	2	-	Private land	Public	संमती पत्राने जमण ताब्यात
29	कोटेश्वरतेहे	1	4	-	-	-	-	
30		1	-	4	-	-	-	

This survey enabled the MMC to identify community toilets that had inadequate seats, were in a state of disrepair, or were completely dilapidated and thus could no

Strengthening the network of community toilets

The previous investments in creating a network of community toilets have stood in good stead for the Council. This was used as a basis for identifying gaps. In this, toilets that were in a relatively good condition were repaired and upgraded, but those that were completely dilapidated were demolished, making way for new and larger community blocks. Once again, the same strategy as in the past – requesting private landowners to grant the MMC permission to upgrade/repair/build on their lands under an informal verbal arrangement – was followed. Except for only one case that remains mired in dispute, none of the other landowners objected to the continuation of the same agreement. Indeed, this emerges as a unique feature of the ODF exercise and appears to have played a decisive role in creating the required toilet infrastructure.

It is also indicative of the community spirit that seems to have been generated **and maintained** in the city. This was possible as residents felt part of the **larger** initiative and willingly contributed (in kind) to the same. In some cases, the communities also made a request via their local councillors for repair or total reconstruction. This entire exercise was self-financed by the MMC. Over the past three years, the Council has spent Rs 20 lakh from its own municipal budget resources. As a result of these initiatives,

longer be used. A number of these were on private land.

an extensive and functional network was created in the city.

Spatial distribution of community toilets: Based on feedback from the community, the MMC has managed to develop a very good spatial distribution of its community toilets. Figure 2 illustrates this. The community toilets are located all through the inhabited area, thus reaching a large population segment without access to individual toilets. Considering a buffer of 150 m (or a walking time of two minutes), the influence area of community toilets extends to more than 66 per cent of the inhabited area of the city.

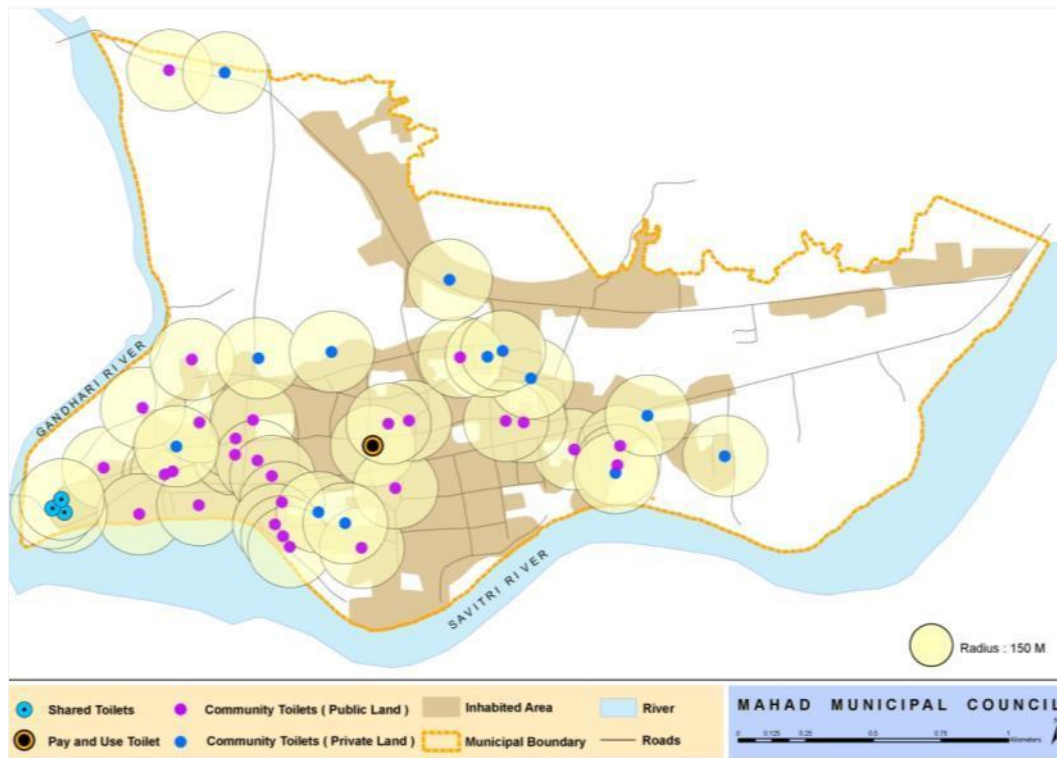
Shared toilets: The MMC has also considered the cases where community toilets were not accepted by the users. At three such locations, the Council has provided one toilet seat per two households (refer Figure 2). Access to these toilets is controlled by those two households and their maintenance is also taken care of by the users.

Provision for women users in community toilets: Mahad has 59 community toilet blocks with provisions for both male and female users. These 59 blocks have 297 seats, out of which 150 seats are for female users and 147 seats for male users. There are no major exclusive blocks for female users. However, there are separate entry points for females and males in these blocks.



A public toilet with separate entry for male and female users.
The city has similar arrangement for all its community toilets.

Figure 2: Location and influence area of community toilets in Mahad



Source: Primary survey.

Regular operation and maintenance of community toilets

Regular cleaning as well as intermittent repairs are carried out by the MMC from its own funds, without levying any charges on the users. Five 'safai karamcharis' were allocated specific 'prabhags' (zones) for daily cleaning. They cover them within a specified time (6 to 10 am) and enter the completion of tasks in a muster book. This is supervised intermittently and not on a day-to-day basis. A 'mukkadam' (supervisor) supervises the status of community toilets from time to time. In case of persistent complaints from the community, a Sanitary Inspector visits the site to oversee the cleaning operations. Thus, a simple framework guides the overall operation and maintenance (O&M), allowing a flexible and manageable system to emerge. Within it, whenever conspicuous gaps are noticed, they have been acted upon quickly, even as routine tasks went on.

Specific complaints by users are attended to within a reasonable time frame. Although there is a 'muster' kept in the Council office for formal registration of complaints, this was not the preferred system by the users. For instance, complainants visited the Council office or telephonically registered recurrent

problems (such as dirty/overflowing toilets, damaged doors). Sometimes local councillors attending the Council for some other tasks communicated the problem to the concerned officer. The Council, on its part, took "not more than two to three days to respond", as recounted by a Council official. Thus, the overall framework for O&M was personalised and interactive.

The Health Department of the MMC has one Head of Department (HoD), one Assistant, one Supervisor and 47 Safai Kamgaars (which include permanent and temporary staff). Of the 47, five are engaged in the daily cleaning of the community toilets. The city is divided into five 'prabhags', each allocated to one Safai Kamgaar for daily cleaning in the morning. Thus, the ratio of number of seats per staff member is about 60. Regular O&M of community toilets was confirmed during the Validation Exercise by the PAS team. It was observed that community blocks were in a reasonably good and functional condition in almost all the locations (refer photos). Indeed, regular O&M of the toilet infrastructure emerges as an important contributing factor to the ODF status of Mahad.



One of the 59 community toilets blocks in Mahad.



The community toilets are cleaned regularly and well kept.



Easy access to community toilets has helped in eliminating open defecation in Mahad.

Efforts continue : 'Hagindari Mukta Yojana'

Following the Toilet Survey, under the directives of the Government of Maharashtra (GoM), a formal 'Hagindari Mukta Yojana' (ODF Project) was publicly initiated by the MMC in 2008. This directive was issued under the Sant Gadge Baba Nagari Swachhata Abhiyan (SGBA) by the GoM's Department of Water Supply and Sanitation. Following a meeting with the Zila Adhikari of Raigad district, a plan of action was outlined by the MMC. A zone-wise inventory of the

open defecation status of the city was made by appointing four municipal staff (mukkadams). An in-depth exercise, it contained details such as name of the 'prabhag' (zone), total number of inhabitants in that zone, open defecation spots in the zone, total number of individuals resorting to open defecation, percentage to total population, total number of community toilets, and, finally, total number of seats (Table 4).

Table 4: Inventory of public toilets

हण्णदारी ढुक्त योऒना सऒरतर अहऒाल.

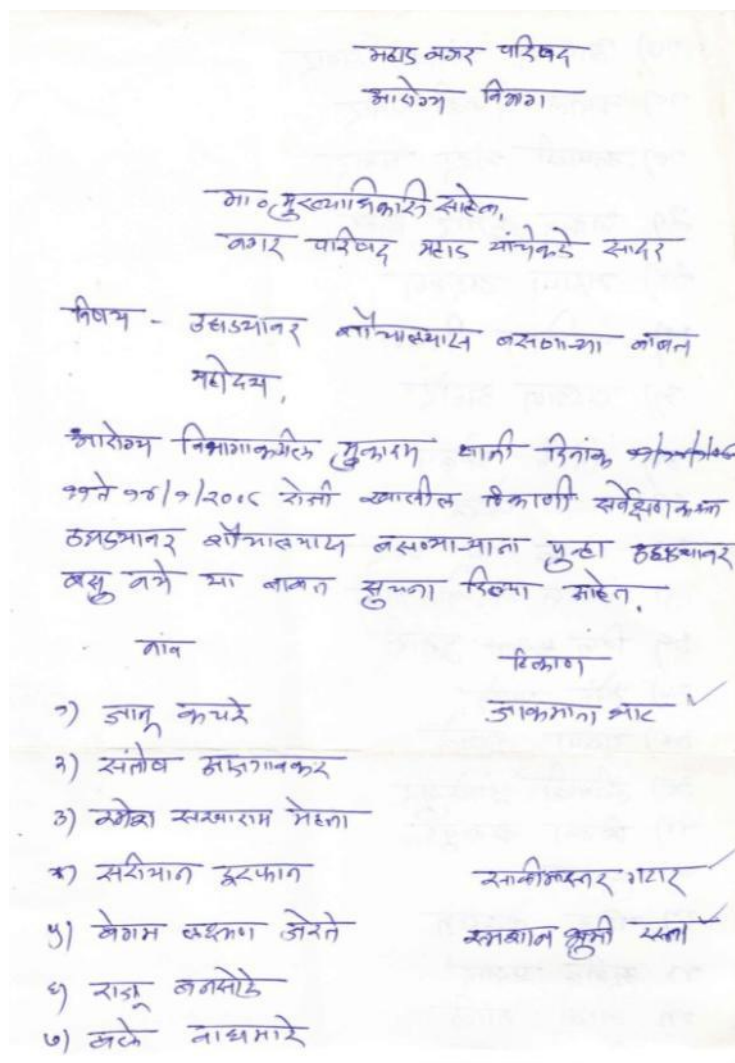
उघडयाऒर शौऒालयास ऒरणारे वऒर्कीऒी ढाहीती

अ.क्र.	ढुरढागाऒे ढांऒ	लोक संखऒा	उघडयाऒर शौऒास ऒसत असलेल्या ढागाऒे ढांऒ	संखऒा	ढकऒेऒारी	सदर ढागासाठी असलेल्या सारऒऒनीक शौऒकुढांऒी संखऒा ँकुण सलढ	
						संखऒा	ँकुण सलढ
१.	२.	३.	ॡ.	ॡ.	ॢ.	ॣ.	।.
१	ढुराढलण रुणालऒ	१ॡॡॡ	--	--	--	३	१ॢ
२.	ढललेढरी ऒार्ईऒ	१ॡ१२	सुतारऒाळी	३	०.१ॡ	ॡ	२२
३	ढुरढाढ ऒॉलऒनी	१३ॡ०	सुढशानढूढी रसुतऒा	३ॢ	२.ॢ२	२	११
ॡ.	संतऒोहीढास ढगर	१ॡॢ०	--	--	--	ॢ	३०
ॡ.	सुंदरऒाळी	१ॡॡ१	--	--	--	२	१०
ॢ.	ऒाऒरतळे	१३ॡॡ	--	--	--	२	१०
ॣ	ऒलऒाढातऒा उघान	१३ॢ२	--	--	--	२	१२
।.	ढांऒर हाउस	१ॡॢॢ	--	--	--	१	३
॥	ऒांतीसुतंढ	१ॡॡॡ	ऒॉढेशऒरी तळे	ॡ	०.२ॡ	ॡ	३२
१०	ऒऒढारतळे	१ॡॡ१	--	--	--	--	--
११	ढोसुखी ऒाळी	१ॡॢॡ	--	--	--	२	१२
१२	ढंदरढाऒऒा	१ॡॢ१	--	--	--	२	१२
१३	ऒॉढऒाळी	१३१ॢ	ऒाऒढातऒा घाढा/सऒळऒाढा ढाऒऒा.	ॡ	०.३०	२	११
१ॡ	सुढली ढढोहर ढंदर	१२ॢॢ	--	--	--	--	--
१ॡ	ढऒळऒाळी	१२११	सऒढढाढ	ॡ	०.३०	२	ॢ
१ॢ	ऒुंढारऒाळी	१२ॢॡ	--	--	--	३	१ॢ
१ॣ	छ. शलऒाऒी उघान	१ॡ०२	--	--	--	२	१२
		२ॡ२ॡॢ	--	ॡ१	०.२१	ॡ०	२१ॡ

The Health Department of the MMC continued to identify individuals still found defecating in the open and made their names public (Figure 3). In a city of a few thousand households, this 'personalisation' of an undesired activity created public shame and became successful in curbing it. As a parallel

activity, it was also proposed to fine the landowners on whose land this practice was found to be prevalent. This proved to a deterrent as landowners started supervising their plots more closely.

Figure 3: Letter to the MMC President in 2008, with a list of persons found defecating in the open



Present situation

The present situation vis-à-vis toilet coverage, both individual and community, is very good. The coverage of households with either individual or community toilets is very good. Evidently, the dedicated efforts by the MMC, after the

Toilet Survey of 2007, towards strengthening physical infrastructure have had a high impact. Data validation by the PAS team shows that all households in Mahad have access to either their own individual toilets (85 per cent) or have easy access to a community toilet (within walking distance of less than 150 m).

Future Plans and Sustainability of ODF Initiative

Mahad has demonstrated a proactive approach towards achieving ODF status. What started as a campaign two decades ago has led to deeper behavioural changes as the city continues to maintain a near total absence of open defecation. Even after the departure of Mr S.S. Sawant in 2006, the key initiator of the ODF campaign, subsequent Council presidents have maintained its momentum. The future plans of the MMC are indicative of this. The MMC too has retained its focus on this objective as demonstrated by a number of initiatives that are either proposed or under implementation.

Provision of individual and shared toilets

Under the Maharashtra Sujal Nirmal Abhiyan's 'Maharashtra Suvarna Mohotsavi Nagari Dalit Basti Pani Puravtha va Swacchata Yojna', the MMC has completed a detailed survey of infrastructure availability in the Dalit community of the city. With the Mega-Mission's objective of 'development and upgradation of infrastructure in water supply, sewerage and urban sanitation sector', individual toilets for this target group will be provided. The cost of an individual toilet is pegged at Rs 12,000, of which 80 per cent is the grant under the scheme, and 20 per cent is the beneficiary contribution. However, the beneficiary contribution will be borne by the MMC from its own funds (Resolution dated 2/2/2012). This will make the individual toilets fully subsidised for poor beneficiaries. This, in addition to the existing infrastructure, will further strengthen the Council's goal of making the city ODF.

Under the same scheme, in areas where individual toilets are difficult due to space constraints, shared toilets would be constructed on land made available by the MMC (Resolution dated 2/2/2012). Both water and electricity connections are proposed in such toilets.

Sub-contracting maintenance of community toilet infrastructure

Under a yearly contract, maintenance of community toilets is being given to a local private contractor. For this, an exhaustive list of items has been drawn. This includes: specifications for water closets; connections to drainage; fixing door shutters and frames of different thicknesses and panelling; panelled window shutters with specific thickness and fittings; specifications for masonry, plastering, painting and waterproofing; tiling; and, grill work for windows and ventilators. Further, the contract also details the type, diameter and necessary fittings (bends, tees, single/double junction joints) for wastewater pipes along with details of excavation, laying and refilling of trenches. Each item outlines a corresponding fixed rate. Thus, this will lead to regular maintenance of community toilets.

Pay-and-use community toilets

The MMC received a grant of Rs 14,100,000 from the 'Nagar Parishad Prashasan Sanchanalaya' (City Manager's Association, Directorate of Municipal Administration) for special projects ('Vaishishtya Purna Yojana') for 2005–06 to 2010–11. Under this grant, a 'pay-and-use' model for community toilets has been sanctioned at a cost of Rs 3,458,741. This

community block adopts a number of innovative design features. For instance, it is a large toilet block containing separate male and female toilets, baths and a caretaker room. This community toilet is proposed on the peripheral boundary of a girl's school in a busy market area on land owned by the Council. Owing to its location, it is designed in a manner so as to clearly demarcate areas of usage for the school and the general public, each with separate entrances. The portion for common use is patterned on the pay-and-use model. Within this arrangement, requirements of both the user groups – the students of the school as well as the general public in the market area – will be met.

Construction of a two-storey community toilet block

The Council proposes to demolish two community toilet blocks that are in a dilapidated condition. In their place, the new model proposed is a double-storey block with 11 seats – six for male users and five for female users. This double-storey community toilet block has been proposed as a response to space constraints on the existing locations. Both

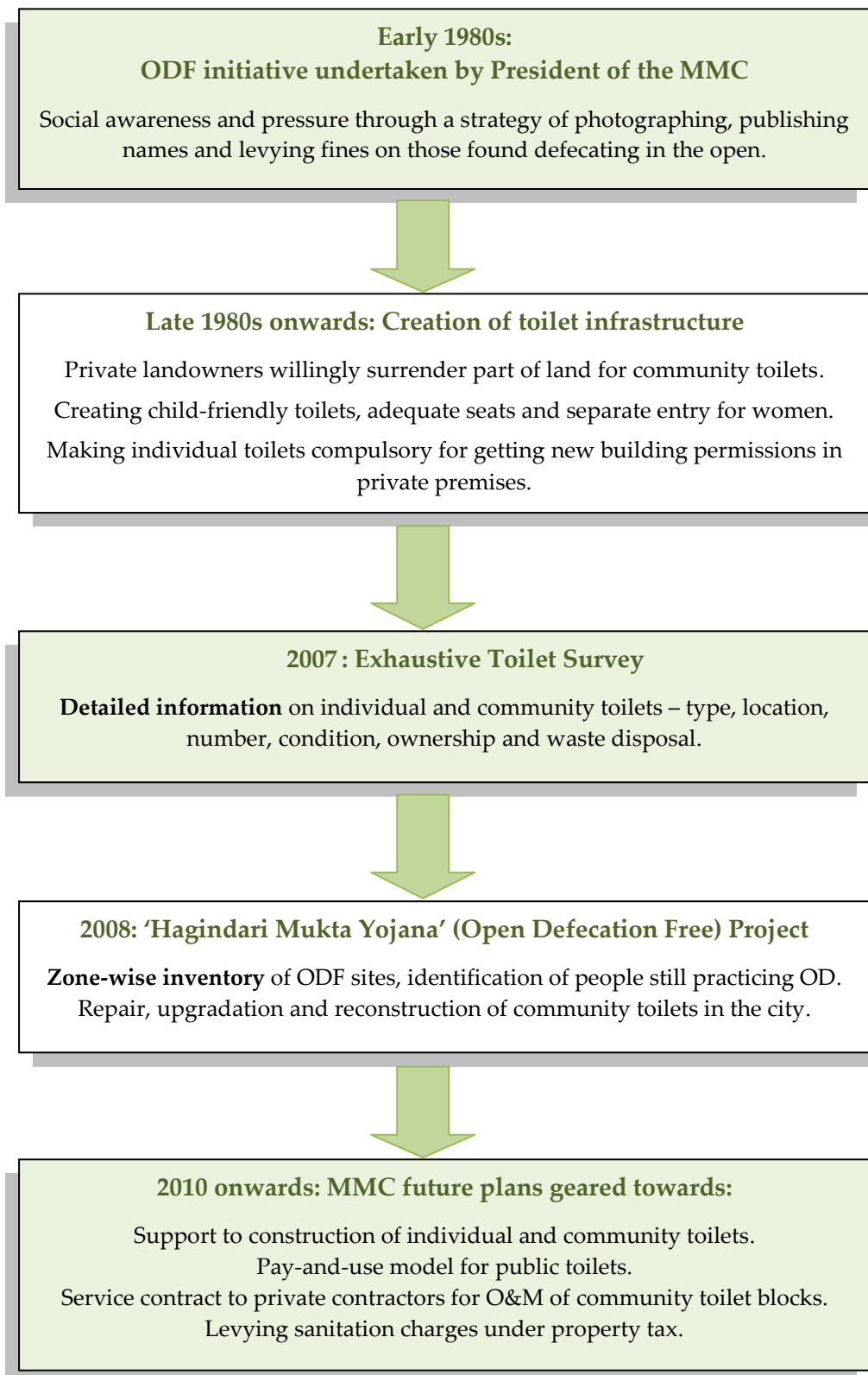
are to be constructed from the Council's own funds.

Introduction of sanitation charges in municipal by-laws

The MMC has proposed to include sanitation charges as part of property tax. A resolution to this effect has been passed in the Municipal by-laws. The exact amount to be charged is currently under discussion.

Thus, the two-pronged approach of the Council is being continued in its future plans too: both for assessing needs and creating the required infrastructure as well as properly maintaining the existing facilities. Discussions with the Council president also revealed that the focus is increasingly towards construction of individual toilets with adequate on-site disposal via septic tanks. Similarly, levying user charges via pay-and-use community blocks and introduction of sanitation charges in the property tax indicate a movement away from fully subsidised infrastructure and service towards a more financially viable one. Further, the Council's efforts towards introducing innovative design features are noteworthy.

Figure 4: Timeline of key milestones



Conclusion

The story of Mahad shows the efforts of a small ULB to achieve the status of an ODF city. A number of factors have contributed to this.

Leadership

The central role played by a visionary leadership is evident in all the efforts undertaken by the MMC. The first impetus towards making Mahad ODF came from the President of the MMC almost two decades ago. This laid the foundation for a sustained drive against open defecation. The long leadership provided by this President (1985–96 and then 2001–06) gave momentum to this campaign and maintained its focus. As recalled by the Council President, officials as well as several councillors, his towering personality created a culture of pro-action and responsiveness which, over time, got deeply embedded into the manner of conducting civic affairs. Even succeeding Presidents demonstrated a strong commitment towards this goal, as evident in the Toilet Survey of 2007 followed by systematic efforts undertaken for the ‘Open Defecation Free Project’ in 2008.

As recalled by the present President of the MMC, “The long and sustained efforts by one individual have created an environment where similar conduct is expected of us. Although he has departed, we are still guided by the precedents laid by him.” Indeed, the catalytic role played by the leadership of the MMC emerges as one of the key ingredients in making Mahad an ODF city.

Social pressure

A combined strategy of publicly exposing and penalising offenders and, in some cases, even levying fines was highly effective. It created indirect social pressure and gradually brought about a deeper behavioural change in the residents such that this practice became unacceptable. In a small, personalised setting of a town, this unwanted publicity and the attached shame was one of the biggest deterrents. In many other instances, especially in rural areas, this strategy has been used with high impact as part of a larger information, education and communication (IEC) initiative that has included well planned efforts at using folk dances, traditional theatre, children’s rallies, door to door campaigns, etc. In Mahad’s case, IEC in the formal sense of the word was not used, and was probably not needed given the urban setting. However, what is evident is a strong focus and relentless efforts to achieve goals. Guided by a proactive leader, the willing participation of the Council staff as well as town residents is notable.

Ensuring adequate physical toilet infrastructure

A gradual behavioural change was supported by creating adequate physical infrastructure of toilets – both individual and community. The Toilet Survey of 2007 that documented existing conditions and identified gaps was followed by construction of new community toilet blocks and repair of those in a decrepit state. The future proposals of the MMC are also geared towards augmenting as well as maintaining this infrastructure.

Thus, both the quantity as well as the quality of toilet infrastructure and linked services were never undervalued by the MMC.

Innovative arrangements to involve private landowners

In the MMC's case, one of the most unusual arrangements is that of private landowners surrendering part of their lands for construction of community toilets. The complex issue of land availability, ownership and acquisition was circumvented due to this unique arrangement. A sense of inclusiveness and participation is demonstrated by this agreement wherein the residents willingly contributed towards a larger collective effort by the Council.

Continued focus on O&M

The O&M of the physical infrastructure thus created has been given sufficient attention by the MMC. This has assured continued usage by the community, thereby also deterring open defecation. Future proposals stress on sustainability of the created infrastructure via sub-contracting the maintenance of community toilets as well as levying user fees.

Thus, in this journey of Mahad towards achieving ODF status, the proactive and sustained efforts by the MMC to bring about deeper behavioural changes supported by well functioning toilet infrastructure emerge as the key ingredients.

The Performance Assessment System (PAS) Project

The 'Performance Assessment System – PAS' is a five-year action research project, initiated by the CEPT University, Ahmedabad, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. It supports development of appropriate tools and methods to measure, monitor and improve delivery of urban water and sanitation services in the states of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The PAS Project comprises three components of performance measurement, monitoring and improvement.

The PAS Project is supporting the development of City Sanitation Plans (CSP) to achieve open defecation free status for four small cities in Maharashtra, which are Wai, Hingoli, Ambajogai and Sinnar. These cities were selected by the Water Supply and Sanitation Department, Government of Maharashtra, and Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran (MJP). A framework for city-wide assessment using the full value chain for urban sanitation has been developed, which is being used in developing these CSPs. Initial workshops were organised by the MJP with officials of these cities to discuss the CSP approach. Draft plans for these cities are ready and will be discussed with city officials.

PAS Project

CEPT University
Kasturbhai Lalbhai Campus, University Road, Navrangpura
Ahmedabad 380 009, Gujarat, India
Tel: +91-79-26302470
Fax: +91-79-26302075
www.pas.org.in

All India Institute of Local Self-Government
M.N. Roy Human Development Campus, Plot No. 6, F-Block, Bandra Kurla Complex
Bandra (East), Mumbai 400 051, Maharashtra, India
Tel: +91-22-26571713/14/15
Fax: +91-22-2657 2286
www.aiilsg.org