

REPORT

on

3-DAY WORKSHOP ON RAPID ACTION LEARNING (RAL)

Organized by:

Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyan, Government of Bihar

In association with:

Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC)

&

CLTS Knowledge Hub, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK

Date: October 29-31, 2018

Venue: Chanakya Hotel, Patna, Bihar



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The RAL workshop has been very beneficial for the state, district and local functionaries as the process followed was very simple and strategic and helped in cross district learning effectively. We would promote RAL workshops for not only SBM-G but other sectors, aspects and levels for overall learning in the state.

The most interesting aspect of the workshop was the action plans prepared by each district to make their districts ODF. Action plans help in strategic planning but should also include backward phase wise planning to ensure 100 % implementation. The state would also take up this strategy to review low coverage districts for an equal understanding for the state and district about the progress made by them.

Bihar being one of the states having the most undernourished children is now witnessing a generational change with more and more children using toilets and inculcating WASH practices. It gives me immense pleasure to have Jeevika as the implementing structure in Bihar as we use their models to achieve success by constant trainings with Jeevika women. We are now focusing on shifting the behaviour pattern from the beneficiary model to the *Labhuk*/owner model, where a labhuk is a person who owns and understands the importance of a toilet.

Further on sustainability we would now plan on SLWM parameters and waste treatment mechanisms to cater to problems of open drains, open waste accumulation and faulty septic tanks. Lastly, we would continue to focus more on Behavioural change, quality and sustainability over the progress and coverage of the state.

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– Shri Arvind Kumar Chaudhary, I.A.S., Secretary, Rural Development Department, Government of Bihar while addressing participants during Rapid Action Learning Workshop in Patna on October 31, 2018.

INTRODUCTION

A state level workshop to share, learn and plan with quality and sustainability in the context of Swachh Bharat Mission was organized in Bihar on October 29th to 31st, 2018. It brought together 75 participants from 10 districts of Bihar, viz., Katihar, Banka, West Champaran, Begusarai, Aurangabad, Nalanda, Bhagalpur, Bhagalpur, Siwan, Patna and Madhubani. Seven of these districts are allotted to WSSCC by Government of India to support as development partner and remaining are the districts where Global Sanitation Fund was implemented. The workshop was designed to provide and facilitate a learning platform for sharing experiences and ideas between these districts.



BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Since the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin (SBM (G) Bihar has continued to lag behind due to its poor sanitation coverage. Nevertheless, it is commendable that Bihar did not rush into making communities ODF and created a structure namely, Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyan which is in collaboration with Jeevika. Jeevika has a web of local level empowered natural leaders and champions who took the mission with utmost zeal. As a result, coverage increased to 68% along with 80-90% of usage of those toilets.

At district level and state level many innovations, practices and new ideas were being initiated and implemented which resulted in Bihar having quality and sustainable ODF communities. This 3-day workshop was organized in Patna by Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyan in collaboration with Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) and CLTS Knowledge Hub, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex UK to identify these successful practices.

This workshop was inaugurated by Shri Arvind Kumar Chaudhary, Secretary, Rural Development Department, Government of Bihar in the presence of Shri Balamurugan D., CEO cum Mission Director, Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society, Government of Bihar. Participants included

district level implementers including Deputy District Commissioner, Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks, District Coordinators, District Consultants – Capacity Building & IEC along with block coordinators, Mukhiyas and Swachhagrahis/Motivators. Representatives of State Project Management Unit, Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyan also participated along with representatives from Development Partners, UNICEF, World Bank, Water Aid and Feedback Foundation. Over the three days 75 participants including district level staff from ten districts came together to share and learn insights, innovations and successful practices for changing behaviors and establishing and maintaining Open Defection Free (ODF) Gram Panchayats (GP), blocks and districts.

OBJECTIVES

The overriding aim of the workshop was to provide the state, districts, blocks and GPs with the ideas and means to accelerate progress towards Swachh Bharat while ensuring sustainability and quality. The workshop was designed:

- To learn from successful experiences and to provide opportunities for sharing of insights, innovations and successful practices, including methods, processes and approaches developed in the districts.
- To make these accessible for adoption and/or adaptation as desired by other districts
- For district teams to review practical lessons learnt and to integrate that learning into district specific actions.

PROCESS INVOLVED

- In advance searching for and summarizing challenges faced during implementation, insights, approaches and methods, lessons learnt.
- At the workshop sharing these, along with others, through a mix of plenary and group discussions.
- Proactively finding out and learning with each District Team working together to gather information from others, and through field visits and participants' reflections.
- District teams reviewing lessons learnt and planning recommendations and actions to take forward in their own Districts.



METHODOLOGY OF THE WORKSHOP

Over the course of three days the process enabled peer-to-peer horizontal learning between districts at different stages of the journey towards ODF. The workshop was focused on action - with the end goal being district teams generating recommendations for ways forward and action plans that strengthen their districts SBM programme to ensure quality and sustainability.

District teams were made up of approximately 5-6 people each. These teams were then joined by their respective Deputy Development Commissioner (DDC) and Director, District Rural Development Authority (DRDA) on the final day.

Day One: Brief sharing of practical experiences and challenges faced in plenary followed by sharing of innovations and good practices and district teams hunting and gathering to find out more from other Districts.

Day Two: Districts teams were mixed up in different field teams to maximize cross district interactions and then visited 7 villages across 2 districts, finding out about issues of concern and what approaches have been used at GP level in the districts of Bihar. On return they shared their findings with their District teams.



Day Three: District teams developed action plans for making their district ODF and were presented in presence of the Secretary, Rural Development Department, Government of Bihar and CEO cum Mission Director, BRLPS.

CHALLENGES FACED DURING IMPLEMENTATIONS

As discussed, following are the various challenges faced by the districts in implementation and effective functioning of SBM-G in Bihar:

1. Administrative Challenges:

- Communication Gap between the administration/state team with the district teams in dissemination of information.
- Lack of proper payment channel resulting in delay in disbursement of funds/incentives from the State to the Districts and further from the districts to the Gram Panchayats.
- Disinterest of the PRI (Panchayati Raj Institutions) in support and construction of toilets
- Updating of Baseline has been identified as a huge problem as there are ghost and double beneficiaries which makes it difficult for the real beneficiary to get a toilet.
- There is less coordination between the PRI's and the administration.
- Pressure from the government to achieve ODF.

2. Technical Challenges:

- Lack of acceptance of Twin Pits and high acceptance of Septic Tanks as toilet technology.
- Faulty Design of Septic Tanks
- No Supply chain management of construction materials.
- Delay in updating geo tagging entries on Management Information Systems (MIS).
- No scalable Toilet Technology available for difficult areas such as flood prone or areas with High Water Table.

- Lack of disabled/elderly friendly toilets
- 3. Behavioural Challenges:**
 - Lack of awareness towards WASH, its existing schemes and toilet technology
 - Poverty and Illiteracy
 - CLTS in heterogeneous communities is difficult.
 - Non usage of IHHL due to delay in incentive money.
 - Operation and maintenance of IHHL
 - Less construction of IHHL due to demand of incentive money in advance.
- 4. Other Challenge:**
 - Lack of skilled people at the implementation stage.
 - Need for capacity building trainings regularly at all levels -state, district and community.
 - The Key Resource Centre attached at district and state level lack trained resources
 - Lack of space for constructing toilets is a problem for some vulnerable communities.
 - Keeping Nigrani Samiti and Swachhagrahi active is very difficult without incentives and recognition
 - Lack of availability and maintenance of public or community toilets
 - Lack of community toilets for migrant communities

EXAMPLES OF PRACTICAL SCALABLE INITIATIVES

- ❖ Jeevika Mission known as the Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society (BRLPS) have converged with Swachh Bharat Mission(G) to introduce Jeevika Led Total sanitation which includes Jeevika women as flag bearers of sanitation and making them as the implementation structure of the scheme.
- ❖ Public Distribution System is used to identify the families which need Inter Personal Communication.
- ❖ Similar to CLTS, districts have come up with SLTS to involve school children and teachers as major flag bearers for creating awareness on sanitation.
- ❖ Thermocol wall toilets have been constructed by many poor fish sellers, to not compromise on the usage of toilets.
- ❖ Campaign like ‘Dera Dalo Ghera Dalo’ where children go visit families who are adamant to defecate in open and not construct a toilet.
- ❖ Most people in Bihar worship Goddess Durga. On a weekly basis, common dumping grounds are identified and cleaned, and hoarding of Durga Temple is put up
- ❖ ODF Sports: Non-ODF villages are identified and cricket match and other sports are organized in that village. However, the host village is not allowed to participate as people in their people are defecating in open
- ❖ IEC Ranking Chart: IEC ranking chart is a format with all IEC activities listed which are taking place in a district and then each block is ranked according to the occurrence of these activities.
- ❖ Chai Piyo Abhiyaan: A campaign where religious, influential and natural leaders have a tea session with the community to talk on various aspects of WASH.
- ❖ Monthly block level exhibitions/stalls will draw the school children, youths and natural leaders to do something for the society and community they live in
- ❖ Nigrani Samitis, Swachhagrahis, Jeevika sisters and Masons are felicitated and recognized in unique ways to create a sense of motivation and ownership in the community.

KEY LEARNINGS

Key learning identified by participants included:

- The need for and use of a variety of change agents including local leaders, medical practitioners, religious leaders, women and Self-Help Groups, adolescent girls, children, swachhagrahis, Anganwadi workers and others.
- Develop inclusion diagnostics at district levels (identifying remote and other communities that may have been left out) and at gram panchayat levels (identifying poor, vulnerable and marginalized communities including disabled). This should be followed by action plans that ensure special attention and additional investment is made to ensure their inclusion, not only in terms of access, but also regarding their participation in planning and monitoring.
- Requirement of skilled resources in the implementation stage to ensure quality work.
- Masons may also need refresher training focusing on the benefits of twin-pits, ways they can promote them and do's and don'ts during construction.
- Different IEC ideas such as films, local videos, paintings, community-wide events beyond triggering, utilizing local festivals etc.
- Strengthening supply chains of construction materials through the establishment of supply chain specific committees and further centers at District, Block and GP level.
- Putting those with disabilities, the marginalized and most vulnerable on the top of any beneficiary list to ensure LNOB (Leaving No One Behind)
- Addressing myths for instance by having Sona Khad Centres (twin pit completely composted fertilizer) in each village to show village leaders, committees and motivators that it is odourless and harmless and can be used as an organic fertilizer.
- New GP level events and activities including 'Swachhta Olympics', 'Dera Daalo Ghera Daalo', stickers for IHHL, cycles to masons.
- Ideas about block level activities for example block war rooms and monitoring systems and the decentralization of IEC funds.
- SLTS-Better ways to effectively manage and operate of school and Anganwadi toilets by leading behavioral change campaigns with school children and teachers.



FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

Though there are ways the process could be strengthened, the written feedback was exclusively positive. All participants said that the ideas and insights shared were useful and that the three days will make a positive contribution to their work.

- ✚ “By learning from other districts, we will be able to improve our work strategies and get better results and make our district ODF.”
- ✚ “We should work for the future generations and think about what we are leaving behind.”
- ✚ “I learned how to sensitively talk about menstruation with women in order to trigger them. I also learned when the correct time to open a mature pit is.”
- ✚ “The session on action plan was extremely useful. We needed a specific guidance for our district.”
- ✚ “Had there been a session on how to bring ownership in community, it would have been better for me.”
- ✚ “Common people from communities, who have done tremendous job in behavior change, improving quality of program should also participate in these workshops.”
- ✚ “Better structure of activities and better format of work by increasing interactive activities. Talking about expectations of workshop in the initial period of workshop will improve.”
- ✚ “There should be similar workshops at block level to involve and encourage the block level officials so that they get more interested in the mission.”

FOLLOW-UP AND WAYS FORWARD

Several requests were immediately received for similar workshops in other districts of Bihar to cover the entire state.

The most critical next steps are:

- Districts to implement the action plans that were developed.
- To continue to share innovative practices with other districts through RAL in other districts.
- Partner with development organizations to set up Rapid Action Learning Unit in Bihar.
- RAL workshops with Bihar Rural Livelihood Promotion Society (BRLPS) - to promote learning, sharing and exchange of best practices in Jeevika among the state.


