

Ahmedabad Parivartan

Parivartan, meaning complete change, is the object of a new programme in the city of Ahmedabad in Gujarat. Ahmedabad **Parivartan** (also known as the Slum Networking Project) aims to bring affordable and sustainable water and sanitation services within reach of the slums and chawls of the city. Led by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), the project brings the target communities, local non-governmental organisations and the private sector closer in a unique partnership. UNDP-World Bank Regional Water and Sanitation Group for South Asia (RWSG-SA) provides conceptual design support. Parivartan came into being through a joint initiative of the private sector and the AMC to provide basic services to urban poor people living in a slum community called Sanjaynagar.



Sanjaynagar before Parivartan

Thanks to efforts made by the Municipal Corporation, the city's finances have been turned around to provide a firm base for sustaining investments and services. This has been achieved through improved urban management and through forging of partnerships with the wider civil society of the city. In the process, the corporation no longer perceives itself as a sole provider of services but a key player and facilitator as well. **Parivartan** is one amongst a number of innovative programmes which are changing the face of the city today.

Parivartan

1029 slums (informal settlements) and 1383 chawls (tenements) in the city house approximately 300,000 families - 40 percent of the city population - many of whom have few or no access to basic urban services. In the past investments in services for the slums and chawls were generally norms driven and limited in their coverage. They experienced rapid deterioration leading to breakdown of services in many cases.

Parivartan is based on the idea that services should only be provided when there is a clear demand for them. The design of the program has been kept flexible and adaptive, leaving room for change in the institutional, social and technical approaches to respond to experience and changing circumstances during the course of the programme.

Fundamentally **Parivartan** offers a range of services with realistic "price tags" attached, enabling communities to make informed choices about the size and nature of investments to be made.

Ahmedabad Parivartan will link fully with the existing conditions and services in the city. The programme will eventually

be available to any slum which wishes to participate with services fully connected to existing city networks. The institutional arrangements will evolve from within the existing structures in the city.

Rules

After long and careful deliberations, AMC and its partners devised a set of "first cut" rules which attempt to combine the ambitious objectives of the project with the need for simplicity and clarity.

Costs and Cost Sharing : Based on the designs for services developed for the slums, Sanjaynagar being the first, the Corporation decided that an average six thousand rupees (Rs 6,000) per dwelling unit would be required to finance the services being offered. The services are :

- Roads and paving
- Water supply to individual households
- Underground sewerage link for individual households
- Storm water drainage
- Street lighting
- Solid waste management
- Landscaping

One of the key features of this ongoing project is that communities are not mute witnesses to the process of change but express choice and gain a meaningful stake in the project through payment of a substantial contribution for services.

In the first phase of the project households pay one third of the total cost of services. A household receiving all services will pay two thousand rupees. Discounts are offered for those already in receipt of some services.



Sanjaynagar after Parivartan

Eligibility : All slums and chawls will ultimately be eligible to be part of the project, but there are rules governing what community must do to access services under Parivartan.

To participate in the project, a community must form an association and indicate its commitment by payment of Rs 2,100 per household. This is made up of the fixed contribution of Rs 2,000 towards capital costs, plus Rs 100 towards initial maintenance expenses.

Sanjaynagar

The pilot scheme in Sanjaynagar, a slum community of 181 households, is complete. The implementation of this pilot scheme was carried out by a Trust, called 'Sharada', created specially for this purpose. The Trust was jointly financed by Arvind Mills (a major local industrial group) and the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation with the local investments secured and handled by SEWA Bank - an all-women bank being run by the Self Employed Women's Association, a well-known union based in Ahmedabad.

Given the success of the experimental project of Sanjaynagar, many slums are now coming forward to participate. The AMC has prepared a further set of ten slums for implementation as part of the pilot phase of the project. A number of donors have also shown an interest in **Parivartan**. External funds, it is felt, may be used as a substitute for private sector contributions in some cases or could be channeled into the provision of trunk services that will enable Parivartan to reach currently unserved areas of the city. A progressive scaling up is required to achieve the ultimate objective of Parivartan or change for the city of Ahmedabad by the year 2003.

Future

Efforts are now underway to identify and establish a satisfactory institutional structure that can deliver services to all eligible slums (300,000 families) over a period of 5 to 7 years. Having played a major role in the establishment of the project rules and in developing collaboration between AMC and its non-governmental partners, RWSG-SA is now providing technical assistance for developing a new institutional mechanism for the project (including capacity building) through its New Delhi Office.

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