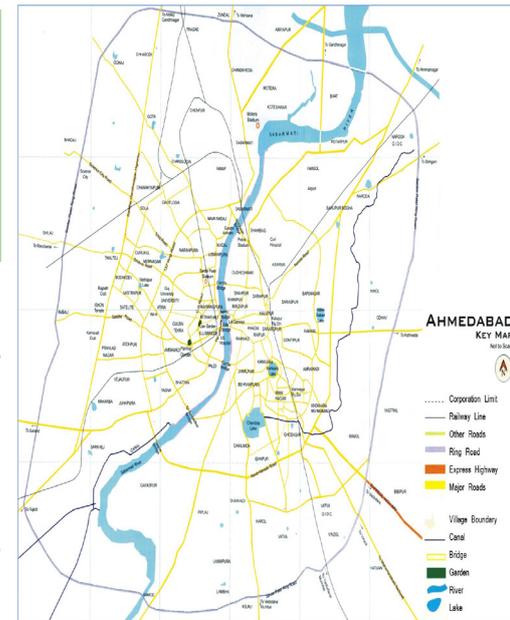


## Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC), Ahmedabad, Gujarat

### Ahmedabad Parivartan Programme

**With many of the city's informal settlements lacking basic water and sanitation services, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation launched the Parivartan programme to mobilise local residents and secure a commitment to the financing and maintenance of water supply, sewerage and drainage infrastructure in slum settlements. The large scale programme used a combination of municipal, community and private investment thereby ensuring that beneficiaries not only contributed to implementation costs but have also taken ownership of the facilities ensuring continued maintenance and upkeep.**

Ahmedabad Parivartan, also known as the Slum Networking Programme (SNP), commenced in September 1995. It is a participatory approach towards achieving sustainable water and sanitation solutions in the slums of Ahmedabad city. The project was undertaken by the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) in partnership with the residents of the slums and chawls in the city and NGOs, with a view to enhance the quality of life and health in the slums through the provision of basic services of water and sanitation. This program encompasses various measures on basic water and sanitation infrastructure such as household connections for water supply and sewerage, storm water drainage, and solid waste management and includes social aspects such as community mobilization, institution building, and micro enterprise formation. It was a unique program where the beneficiaries directly participated in the project by contributing towards the costs and later managing the assets themselves, thereby creating an effective means to ensure ownership and sustainability of the project.



Population: 5.5 million  
Land area: 466 sq km

### The importance of the issue

The vast majority of the urban poor live in slums with no or limited access to basic services and in constant threat of sudden eviction. Even though it is the duty of the municipal corporations to supply basic services to all communities in the city, in the absence of land tenure, communities are unwilling to contribute to such services, leading to non maintenance of infrastructure installed for these communities. A number of initiatives undertaken under different government schemes such as the Environmental Improvement of Urban Slums and the National Slum Development Programme have not yielded results, due to lack of ownership and the necessary means to sustain the actions undertaken in the projects. This has also led to municipal corporations neglecting such areas when it comes to provision of basic services due to the lack of revenue derived and wasted investment of funds.

More specifically, the problems typically encountered within slums are as follows:

- Total or partial absence of infrastructure for water supply, drainage, toilets and solid waste management
- Lack of maintenance of services once constructed
- Lack of awareness on hygiene and health
- Threat of eviction
- Lack of revenue for the services provided by the municipal corporation

Part financed by the European Commission and running from December 2009 to November 2012, ACCESSanitation is working directly with cities in India and the Philippines to tackle inadequate urban sanitation. In addition, the project is also promoting sustainable sanitation on a larger scale through the transfer of good practice elsewhere in the target countries as well as from and to cities in Sub-Saharan Africa. ACCESSanitation is coordinated by the ICLEI European Secretariat located in Freiburg, Germany.

For more information visit: [www.accessanitation.org](http://www.accessanitation.org)

## Ahmedabad in context

Ahmedabad is the seventh largest city and also metropolitan area of India. It is one of the fastest growing cities in India with a total population of approximately 4 million of whom 20 percent live in slums. In order to provide sustained basic services to the urban poor in the city as well as develop the city as a whole, the Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC) collaborated with the slum communities, NGOs and private organizations to create a partnership to carry out a unique programme of slum development. The AMC was responsible for technical and political support and execution of the project whereas the NGOs helped in community mobilization and garnering support from the community. Private bodies were brought on board for financial assistance.

## Ahmedabad Slum Networking – A community based Sanitation and Environmental Improvement Programme

The project provided individual household level sanitation facilities. These were part-financed by the community thereby ensuring that ownership, and consequently maintenance, of the infrastructure was created. Amongst other provisions, the slum households were connected to the existing water supply, and sewer services provided by AMC. The residents were also assured through written contracts that they would not be evicted for at least 10 years if they participated in the project.

In the slums where the programme was conducted, the beneficiaries paid one third of the costs for water supply and sewerage infrastructure. The remaining costs were shared between AMC and private investors. In cases where the slum household was too poor to afford the required contribution (which came to around Rs. 2100 which is slightly more than 45 USD), financing was made available to slum dwellers through loans from SEWA Bank, a cooperative bank for self employed women.

**Role of Local Government:** The Parivartan Programme was a unique initiative of the AMC. Initially the AMC established partnerships with relevant private organisations and NGOs working in the city creating a wide base of stakeholders for the project. The NGOs were paid by the AMC to mobilise the slum community and encourage their partnership in the project. Securing the community's ownership for the project was crucial to its success. Partnerships with civil society had made the AMC not only a provider of basic services, but also a key facilitator for bringing about social change.

The sharing of costs was another important factor in the success of the project. While the AMC partly financed the costs of the built infrastructure, such as the provision of household level facilities like piped water and individual toilets, the cost of connecting these services to the city's existing facilities was borne by the community itself. The total costs were shared equally between the AMC, the community and private investors.

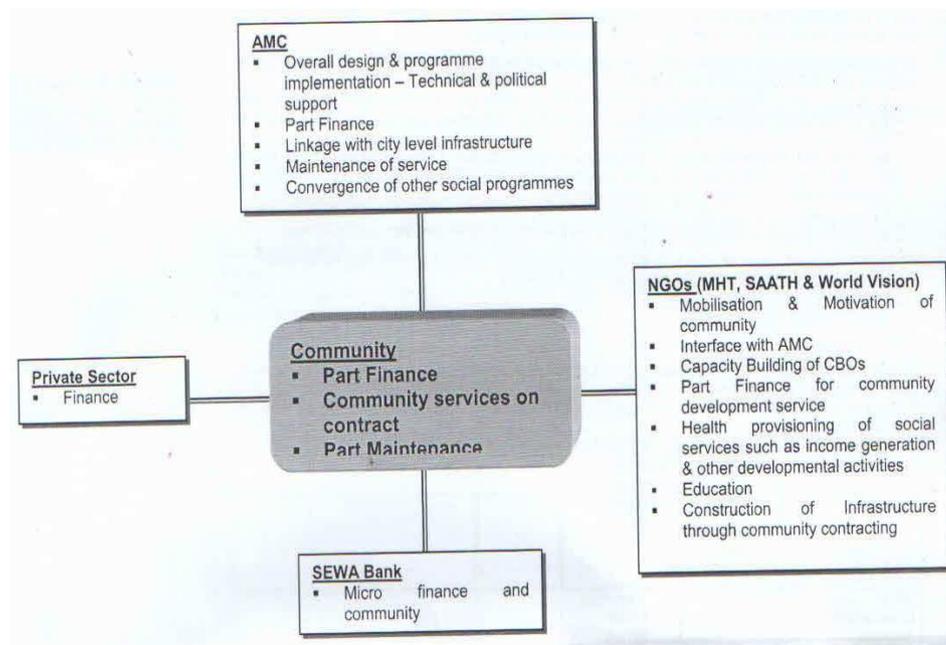
The AMC acted as the host agency for Parivartan, providing part of the finance, coordinating the various partners, and taking the lead in incorporating the programme objectives within the overall city-wide plans. The technical inputs were provided through a specialised unit known as the Slum Improvement Cell. In the pilot phase, the Cell prepared the designs, estimates, contract preparation, tendering, and construction supervision. Through its system of zonal engineering offices, AMC linked Parivartan to city-level capital investment plans.

The AMC also provided written contracts to the slum dwellers assuring them that they would not be evicted for a period of at least 10 years if they participated in the project. This assurance of land tenure garnered essential support from the slums.

**Community involvement and participation:** Involving the community at different stages of the project led to its wide spread acceptance and assured its long-term viability in the city. The project recognized that successful implementation must be followed by regular upkeep and maintenance. For this purpose it involved the slum communities as partners in the project.

The participating NGOs played a crucial role in generating awareness on health and hygiene as well as the need for a programme like Parivartan to ensure sustained, legitimate services can be implemented to achieve overall slum development and community integration into the social mainstream. The NGOs were responsible for the formation of Residents' Associations which pooled savings from the beneficiaries to be used as the communities' contribution for implementing the programme. They also worked with the communities to create women's groups, youth groups, day care centres, health care centres and informal education opportunities to ensure overall slum development. Any slum could participate in the project, provided they formed an association to facilitate project implementation and liaise with the AMC, and paid one-third of the costs of the infrastructure development. The community was also involved in the planning and implementation of the project.

The AMC also involved wider civil society through partnerships to generate financial support from local organizations and industries. A local cooperative bank, SEWA, created and operated by self employed women, provided financing to slum households for the project activities. The NGOs helped the slum residents to form Residents' Associations and facilitated the procurement of loans from SEWA Bank for slum inhabitants who were too poor to pay the one-third costs required to participate in the programme.



Type of partners support

## Results

The Parivartan programme has been recognised as a unique partnership between the community, the administration and the private sector for the development of the city. The programme has helped in the up gradation of a number of slums within the city. At the end of November 2006, a total of 32 slum communities covering 4940 households benefiting 24,700 people had been successfully upgraded. The community members have paid more than US \$ 300,000 to AMC as their contribution towards services, hitherto unheard of in slum development programmes in India. The project not only helped in the provision of basic services to the participating slums, it also linked them to existing civic services thereby promoting holistic and inclusive development, rather than providing one off solutions for a particular section of society.

AMC established a successful partnership between the community and the private sector and through the involvement of the community in the project planning and implementation, assured its ownership and acceptance by the community. Being responsive to demands, the project was modified to incorporate individual toilet connections in slum households, thereby further assuring toilet maintenance by the family. Ownership of project activities was also boosted through AMC written assurances to the families that they will not be evicted if they participated in the project.



Before and after Parivartan Programme

## Sustainability of the initiative

**Health, Hygiene & Nutrition:** Measures have been taken to improve community health education through awareness raising, with a focus on maternal and child health and commonly prevalent diseases in the slums. In addition awareness generation on sanitation aspects coupled with development of relevant infrastructure is improving hygienic conditions within the slums.

**Socio-Cultural & Institutional Aspects:** At all stages of the programme, community involvement has been given priority and is ensured by setting up various local level institutions like – women’s groups and youth groups which are duly registered by the NGOs. Instead of relying on subsidies and grants, the project encouraged community ownership through the sharing of implementation costs with the community.

**Financial & Economic Issues:** Following an amendment in The Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporation Act (BPMC Act) in 1978, the Corporation has been regularly spending up to 10% of funds from its own revenues towards improvement of services in the slums. Under this project, beneficiaries contributed towards one third of the total cost.

The community also had access to credit through microfinance schemes being promoted by a local bank. In order to ensure that project implementation is as per community requirements, it was decided that the last installment of community contribution is released only after the work is completed to their satisfaction.

**Environment & Natural Resources:** Initiatives have been taken to promote hygienic and appropriate solid waste management practices, extending city storm water drains to slum pockets and low lying areas, improving landscaping and creating better, hygienic and liveable communities.

**Technology & Operation:** A separate SNP cell has been formed by the AMC which constitutes technical experts to ensure the identification and adoption of suitable technology for all services being provided under this project. Given the proximity of the slums to the city centre, the extension of underground sewer systems and provision of pour flush toilets was considered appropriate. Operation and Maintenance is being carried out solely by the slum dwellers.

## Lessons learned

The main challenge in the project was to get the slum community interested in paying for the basic services to be provided by the AMC. The involvement of the slum community for paid services was a daunting task in itself since a majority of the households were receiving some of the services from other government schemes free of charge. A number of households also had illegal connections of water supply and had no motive to pay for such services. The AMC actively involved the local NGOs to mobilize the community for this purpose. The NGOs through sustained action in the slums successfully generated interest in the slum dwellers regarding the project. The AMC also promoted the project by providing tenure assurances to the participating slums. A local bank, SEWA Bank, helped the poorer households by giving them loans to help pay the required one-third portion of the total costs for the implementation of the project.

The principal lessons learnt from the Parivartan project in Ahmedabad include the following:

- Involving the community through formal partnerships and creation of slum level associations helped to increase ownership of the project and ensured maintenance of the systems introduced. Making the slum dwellers partners and not just beneficiaries to the project, made them more responsive and helped the corporation in the long run.
- The private sector provided crucial financial support and investment to local developmental work.
- Investment in the provision of basic services and sanitation infrastructure and provision of land tenure typically results in shelter upgrading by the slum residents.
- With proper mobilisation and awareness, slum dwellers are willing to contribute to the cost of services and to pay taxes. Contribution from the slum dwellers also improved their ownership of the project interventions and increased their sense of empowerment.
- Provision of individual facilities proved to be better (and more cost-effective in the long-term) than shared facilities. There was an attitudinal change in the slum dwellers as individual facilities leads to the enhancement of their social status. It also improved the commitment to maintain the facilities by the households.
- Provision of essential services alone is not enough to achieve substantial improvements in quality of life. The softer interventions through community development and engagement which brings about attitudinal changes in the slum residents are equally important.
- The market value of houses within the slums has increased due to the existence of the sanitation and other infrastructure services.

On the whole, the programme has shown a marked change from the physically degraded, unhygienic, illegal slums to a society of empowered citizens with regular provision of basic services, improved health and better living conditions.

## Replication

The Parivartan Programme has been introduced in 41 slums in Ahmedabad, out of which work has already been completed in 32 slums and is ongoing in the rest. The concept is easily replicable through some enterprise from the corporation and the community. A number of slums in Ahmedabad have also used their own initiative to come forward to request the use of this system to improve their sanitation conditions. The city has planned to introduce the concept and partnership in all its 120 slums over a period of 5 years.

The Vadodara Municipal Corporation (VMC), another major city in the state of Gujarat in India, has also adopted the same concept for slum development and is upgrading a slum on a pilot basis with a community contribution of Rs. 3100 per household. Indore, another large city in India has adopted the same concept.

This concept has been recognized as a good practice by the Dubai International Awards for Best Practices to Improve the Living Environment (DIABP).

## Budget and finances

The project was financed through contributions from all partners involved in project development, with AMC being the largest contributor. Details of financial contribution per household are as follows:

Financial Contribution (per household) in INR					
Components	Households	Private sector (Industry and social sectors)	NGO	AMC	Total
Physical Development	2000	2000	-	2000	6000
Community Development	-	-	300	700	1000
External Linkage with city infrastructure	-	-	-	3000	3000
Community Corpus*	100	-	-	-	100
Individual Toilet	-	-	-	5800	5800
<b>Total</b>	<b>2100</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>11500</b>	<b>15800</b>

\*Community Corpus will remain with the association (CBO) which will be used for minor maintenance work.

### Key contacts

Mr. Anand Patel, Addl. City Engineer, Slum Networking Project  
Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation (AMC)  
Phone:+91-79-27553581,27552047  
Mobile: +91-93270-38738  
info@egovamc.com

Ms. Bijlal Bhatt, Coordinator  
Gujrat Mahila Housing SEWA trust  
Phone:+91-79-65446204,26560558  
Mobile:+91-93270-38738

Mr. Rajendra Joshi, Managing Trustee  
SAATH-Initiatives for Equity in Development  
Phone:+91-79-26929821/26922827  
Mobile:+91-98250-05198

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## Authors information

Soumya Chaturvedula and Bedushruti Sadhukhan  
ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability – South Asia  
soumya.chaturvedula@iclei.org ; shruti.sadhukhan@iclei.org  
+91-11-4106-7220

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