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| <b>Name of the Gram Panchayat</b> | <b>Dhangri</b>  |
| <b>UTs</b>                        | <b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>  |
| <b>Theme</b>                      | <b>Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centers</b> |

Gram Panchayat Dhangri belongs to Rajouri block and district of Jammu & Kashmir. It is located 4 KM towards South from District headquarter. Literacy rate of this GP is around 80%, Scheduled Tribe constituting 25% of the total population while Scheduled Caste constitute around 1.55% of the total population of this GP. There are four Higher Secondary Schools, two Primary Schools, one Middle School, one Sub Centre (Health), 05 Anganwadi Centres in the GP. A well-defined market with all basic facilities also exists there. Brick Kilns also exist in the GP providing employment avenues to a large number of marginalized workers. For public, a Common Service Centre is also there in the GP.

There are various factors that impede the progress of decentralization and thus have an impact on participatory development. Social disparities at the grassroots level in terms of caste, class, religion, gender and political status have major impact on culture and had a strong bearing on the ability of people to participate in the development process. Since in this GP as well there is an unequal distribution of resources and power structure thus impeding the decision-making process. In majority of the decisions it was observed that the same was being taken by a handful of the people thereby negating the concept of majority. Majority of the women in the GP are less educated and mainly stay away from the public sphere as compared to their male counterparts, although the scenario is taking a paradigm shift at a rapid pace especially after proper representation by way of 33% reservation for women in the Panchayats. Same is the case with the members belonging to SC/ST community who till this time found their voice unheard.

Though with the introduction of reservation, their representation in panchayats has become mandatory, however, most of the women, SC and ST Representative's still find it difficult to cope with prevailing cultural disparities. Also, inhibition and fear, especially among women and marginalized groups, most of the times discouraged them to participate in Gram Sabha proceedings. These factors influenced important decisions being taken in the Gram Sabha meetings such as:

- (i) The manner in which problems and needs are to be identified and prioritized;
- (ii) how the worksites and beneficiaries are to be identified
- (iii) how funds are to be allocated for projects and
- (iv) How the projects are to be implemented.

Apart from this technologically as well the GP is facing lot of issues since technological intervention is at infancy stage. To make the planning and execution process more transparent, technological intervention is of prime most importance. While framing GPDP, special Gram Sabhas are being scheduled on the portal and Facilitator feedback has been made mandatory. Plans are being uploaded on the Plan plus portal and payments are being made through PRIASoft application. It signifies that the GP is slowly and steadily treading on right track and getting

strengthened at technological front as well. Identification of a genuine beneficiary under a particular scheme is also a challenge in the GP since it has been observed that those not fulfilling the eligibility criteria stake claim over the same. Again, after the establishment of Panchayat this phenomenon has been negated to a greater extent as proper scrutiny is being done by Ward Sabha to Gram Sabha and then finally by the GramPanchayat.

### **Strategy Adopted:**

Primary role was played by the Gram Sabha where all the issues of GP were discussed and prioritized. Once decided in the Gram Sabha, efforts were made to achieve the desired goal through coordinated efforts of all those who were involved in the planning process. Sustained IEC campaign by way of formulations of various groups for awareness generation. These groups comprising of volunteers as well as officials targeted small audience at ward level thereby leading to Behavioural Change among the community members.

Nigrani Committee was formulated for massive door to door campaign and distribution of pamphlets to the households thereby disseminating the message of ODF under SBM-G. The committee was also entrusted the task to keep track of the progress being achieved on daily basis. Involvement of Schools for target specific approach. A format was provided to each student that was to be got filled through their parents regarding the existence of IHHL Units. It helped immensely in analyzing the target to be achieved in a time bound manner. Involvement of Religious leaders helped a lot since they disseminated the message during religious sermons. Emphasis was laid on linking religious teachings with the sanitation activities. Panchayat members played an active role in mobilising the people thereby taking the shape of mass movement. Panchayat members with the support of Ward Sabha/Gram Sabha also played a fundamental role in screening the eligible beneficiaries thereby ensuring transparency in the process. Once the IHHL Units were got constructed again Panchayat with its pivotal role ensured that they are put to use and none of the unit is left abandoned, wherever required water supply was also made available.

Panchayat also played a vibrant role to get the rural infrastructure strengthened by way of passing resolutions and incorporating the work of construction of roads in the Annual plan thereby mitigating the sufferings of various sections of the society.

### **Stakeholders Involvement:**

Various Stakeholders involved for achieving the development objectives of the Gram Panchayat are as under: -

1. Gram Panchayat members
2. Gram Sabha
3. Officials of Rural Development Department
4. Officials of Other line departments
5. Religious leaders
6. Voluntary Groups

7. Students
8. SHGs
9. Persons who are beneficiary of individual oriented schemes
10. Members of Civil Society

### **Results and Outcomes:**

Since two issues that were focused were of ODF and Rural connectivity, hence through multi-pronged strategy and involvement of various stakeholders, the GP was able to achieve both the goals in a short span of time. IHHL units were got constructed in the GP and it was ensured that 100% of these units are put to use by the inhabitants. This has richly benefited to the rural populace in general and women folk in particular. Similarly, with effective management and planning process through Gram Sabha and Panchayat members, issue of road connectivity was also resolved. As on date the GP is having good network of roads catering to the needs of various sections of the society. Students particularly girl students got immensely benefited since they need not to travel on foot to reach their Schools and absence during inclement weather condition has also been avoided. Better rural connectivity has also benefited to the farmers thereby strengthening Primary sector of the economy.

### **Challenges Faced:**

Construction of toilets was taken on mass level under SBM-G, that was not being properly focused previously. First and foremost, challenge faced was resistance from the community since people were not fully ready to shun the old practices and hence sustained Behavioral Change Communication technique was adopted through a rigorous IEC campaign. Initially there was scarcity of funds as well so it was difficult to convince the people that they will get the IHHL incentives after construction of the unit. To make the officials of the department aware of the significance behind the whole scheme proper capacity building and training of the staff was required.

### **Lessons Learned:**

Whenever a task is taken on hand it should be done in a Mission mode. Convergent efforts are required where resources of various departments/schemes can be pooled. Proper Capacity Building and Training is must before undertaking any project/scheme in Mission mode. People are to be made aware of any new intervention through imitation and case studies. Most of the time officials as well as non-officials think that to successfully complete a task only issue that is to be focused is availability of funds, but it has been learnt that through Community participation and with the active support of Panchayat members any task can be accomplished through proper monitoring, supervision and feedback. Apart from all this the first foremost and in fact the last act as well is to make people aware of the impact that the scheme is going to make on the lives of the villagers and then change their behavior accordingly.

The achievements of this GP are purely due to effective Gram Sabha and active participation of the Panchayat member.