

The fight against the pandemic is not yet over. We are constantly battling to stay on top of new data, while also dispelling pervasive myths and misinformation. Our focus has been on reducing the information inequality that has exacerbated the vulnerabilities of our communities. This month's update brings you some important stories from our work strengthening cities and communities in India during this pandemic along with our support to the various interventions by National, State and Local Governments.

Our Director, Manvita Baradi, spoke at the webinar on 'Business of Sanitation: Reinventing Urban Sanitation through Innovation' by Habitat Forum (INHAF). The Discussion can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/2TdMWfK>

Our Dy. Director, Meghna Malhotra, recently spoke about "The Challenges of Menstrual Waste Management in Urban Cities" at the Odisha Menstrual Health & Hygiene Alliance Partners' webinar on 'Pandemic and Periods'. The discussion can be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/3q4oTZG>

We are thankful to the Govt. of India, Govt. of Gujarat, Govt. of Odisha, Govt. of Rajasthan, Govt. of Telangana, local governments, our funding partners- BMGF, USAID, and Samhita Social Ventures and most of all, our partners in the communities for their continued support.

Please forward this newsletter to anyone that might be interested in this work. You can also email us at [info@umcasia.org](mailto:info@umcasia.org) if you want to access any of the material developed in this program.

### **[Assessing Your Interest in Continuing Education](#)**

We want to know more about your interest in professional development and continuing education. If you could spare 5-7 minutes and share your opinions, we would be very grateful. Please fill out the survey below. We would also appreciate it if you would share this with your team and other contacts.

If you have any questions please reach out to us at: [urbancollege@umcasia.org](mailto:urbancollege@umcasia.org)  
Thank you!

### **[Continuing Education Survey](#)**

### **[Training support to WATCO Odisha](#)**

In April, UMC conducted an orientation program on compliance with standard operating protocols to be observed during cleaning of maintenance holes & sewer lines for the Private Sanitation Service Operators (PSSO).

As a next step, UMC supported the Housing and Urban Development Department, Odisha and WATCO under the Garima Scheme to conduct training programs to demonstrate the use of PPE and safety equipment required for confined space entry. It was organized for two divisions of WATCO. A total of 75 participants including assistant managers, supervisors attended the training program.

The aim of the training was to ensure that there's no human entry in septic tanks/maintenance holes without proper equipment (and with permission). UMC oriented the participants to

institutionalize safe practices so as to mitigate the dangers of this reprehensible practice and avoid the deaths of any sanitation workers.

We also made a short drama-based tutorial on Emergency Response Sanitation Units in Hindi. The video can be accessed [here](#).



Demonstration of the use of PPE and safety equipment for confined entry space

### **Supporting Khordha and Janti Municipality form Covid Management Ward Level Committees (CMC)**

In the municipalities of Khorda and Jatni Municipality, we have been supporting the formation and training of Covid Management Committees in every Ward. These committees are been formed based on the directive from the Government of Odisha to contain the spread of COVID. The committee consists of the ward in charge, Mission Shakti Group (also called SHG) members, Asha and Anganwadi workers, representatives from vulnerable sections of society, and volunteers.



The ward level committees will focus on reaching out to and supporting migrant returning and incoming workers, they will get access to testing, support and encouragement to quarantine when necessary, and awareness on appropriate COVID practices.

Ward Level Covid Management Committees

### **Fighting Vaccination Myths in Warangal**

As part of Information, Education and Communication strategy to fight vaccine hesitancy, UMC developed collaterals on debunking vaccination myths in English and Telugu for mass dissemination. The posters developed by UMC are being disseminated among the vaccination centers, Community Resource Persons, Self-Help Groups, & sanitation workers & will reach over 50,000 SHG members to spread awareness and fight vaccine hesitancy in Warangal. As of today, these posters on Debunking Vaccination Myths have reached over 4000 SHGs. These are available for free and reuse under Creative Commons. Reach out to us at

[[info@umcasia.org](mailto:info@umcasia.org)] if you would like to use these collaterals in your work.



Left: Poster on Debunking Vaccine Myths Right: Dissemination of posters

### Supporting Ganjam District Conduct Vaccination Drives

UMC in collaboration with Gram Vikas is supporting Sorada and Jagannath block administration in conducting vaccination drives. Our community champions are closely working with frontline healthcare professionals in these blocks to facilitate individuals with the nearest Primary Health Centre/ Community Health Centres for vaccines.

The community champions contacted the family members of migrant workers and prepared a list of

individuals above the age of 45 who have not received the vaccines. The existing enumeration data from EMBRACE was used. Eligible individuals were linked to anganwadi workers to support their vaccination.



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