

In the wake of COVID-19 and the lifting of the lockdown, there is an increasing need to think about the safety of our frontline workers and the ways in which we can build empowered citizen platforms to not only safeguard themselves from COVID-19 but to emerge stronger than before.

This issue brings to you glimpses from across our programs in this direction. We are thankful to the Govt. of India, Govt. of Gujarat, Govt. of Odisha, Govt. of Rajasthan, Govt. of Telengana, local governments, our funding partners- BMGF and USAID and our community engagement partners for their continued support.

UMC signs MOU with Odisha Government for implementing GARIMA Scheme

UMC collaborated with the Government of Odisha to design and implement the GARIMA scheme that will bring safety & dignity to core sanitation workers of the state. The vision is to make Odisha a Zero accident & Fatality-free state for core sanitation workers.

Sanitation workers are the silent, unsung heroes without whom our cities cannot function. All core sanitation workers will be identified through a rigorous enumeration & registration process. The Scheme regulates and institutionalizes core sanitation services and ensures mandatory provision of personal protective equipment and safety devices, includes compensation for accident or injury, EPF, ESI, Family pension and disability support. It also introduces a special wage category for sanitation workers, risk & hardship allowance, provides health & life insurance, free education for children up to post graduation, and provides 90% subsidies for housing and two wheelers. An initial corpus fund of Rs. 50 crore has been created to implement GARIMA. The scheme envisages the creation of a State Commission for Core Sanitation Workers.

Watch a short video on the film here: https://youtu.be/_ExDvT1JW4w

UMC will provide technical assistance to establish the Garima Cell that will oversee the implementation of the scheme across all cities of the state. UMC thanks the support of Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.



Figure 1: UMC signed MOU with Government of Odisha

'Gyan thi Gammat'

Bridging the Learning Gap in MISAAL Settlements of Ahmedabad

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected the lives of urban poor in many ways and one of the most prevalent problems is children's education. Government/municipal schools are either closed or a few have shifted their education online. Children from disadvantaged households are losing valuable learning time and given their lack of network connectivity and literate family members, they do not have access to any other sources for keeping them meaningfully engaged.

In order to engage such children and anchor their interest in education, UMC initiated the 'Gyan thi Gammat (Learning with Fun)' initiative in 5 MISAAL settlements of Ahmedabad in collaboration with PRATHAM. The initiative focuses on providing aptitude-based learning for overall development of these children. The emphasis is on enhancing their basic reading, writing, speaking skills, calculation skills, general knowledge and WASH related behaviour. 'MISAAL Fellows – teaching facilitators' having interest in educating children, were identified in each settlement, trained by PRATHAM, where they have learnt activity-based teaching methods and were provided an education kit comprising of a computer and white board for visual learning aids that accelerated the grasping skills of children.



Figure 2 and 3 : Children learning sessions under the UMC initiative 'Gyan thi Gammat' in five MISAAL settlements of Ahmedabad in collaboration with PRATHAM.

MISAAL Committees - Agents of Behaviour Change in Porbandar

Under the MISAAL program, in light of increasing caseload of COVID-19, awareness material has been designed and shared in the high risk areas. MISAAL Settlement Committees (MSC) in Ashapura Khapat and other areas through the support of the Porbandar Municipality and SAATH took the responsibility to spread awareness amongst the community regarding COVID-19. MSC members ensured that people took keen interest in the subject and understood its importance. The participation and leadership displayed depicts the community's preparedness for the pandemic and other challenges faced by them. Such settlement level committees have shown their relevance and need in times of a crisis such as the COVID-pandemic. UMC will continue providing necessary support and training to these samitis.

Study to Assess Suitability of Existing PPEs for Sanitation Workers in Odisha

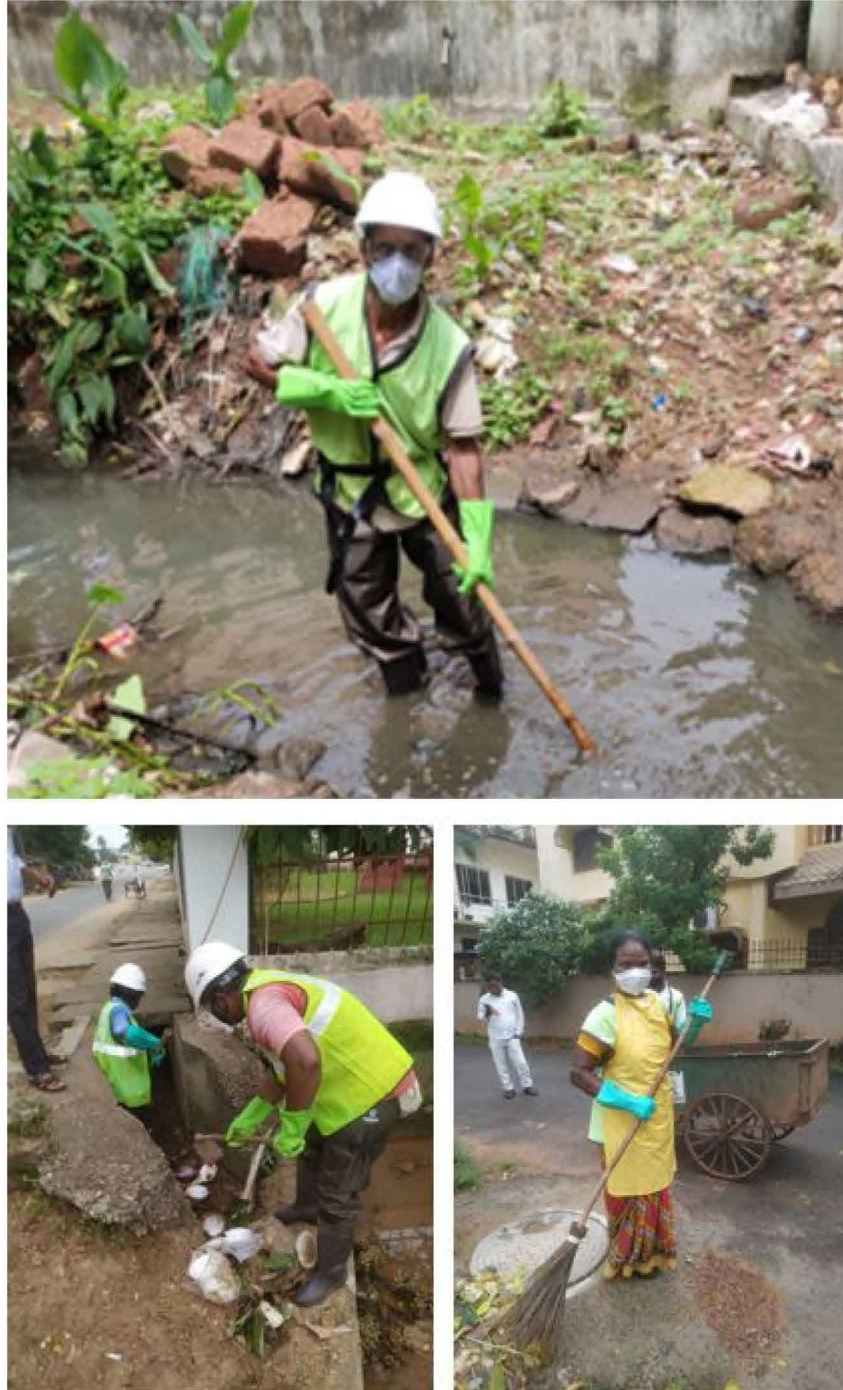


Figure 4, 5 and 6 : Sanitation workers using PPEs at work.

Availability of well designed, comfortable PPEs that offer the required protection to sanitation workers and also ensure that they are convenient for all genders has been a blind spot in the sanitation success story of India.

While PPEs can be life-saving for the workers, it also causes extreme discomfort by trapping heat inside the impermeable materials; the gloves and the boots restrict the working and reduce their nimbleness and cause excessive sweating; gloves and masks are not of the right sizes.

UMC with the HUDD, Govt. of Odisha decided to take a human centered design approach to PPEs and help identify the components of such equipments and devices. The study was initiated in Bhubaneswar. 30 sanitation workers have been selected and have been provided different sets of PPEs. The objective is to use this feedback from the sanitation workers, gain granular insights on their needs and convenience, ease of washing and storage etc. and then to engage with PPE manufacturers in order to modify existing PPEs and develop innovative protective gear.

ICMA Unite - Annual Conference



UMC is a legacy organization of ICMA, and continues to partner with ICMA in the South Asian region. Fondly known as ICMA-India Office, UMC has partnered with ICMA for numerous programs. And every year, UMC looks forward to ICMA's annual conference

This year, in the wake of the global pandemic, ICMA's annual conference is going digital- Unite. This virtual gathering will take place September 23-26 and will bring local government professionals together from around the globe to learn from each other and address the new realities of our communities. Attendees will have access to:

- 100+ education sessions available to view on-demand during the event and for 90+ days after the event.
- An all new, and easy-to-use online digital event platform to connect and network with your local government peers, experts, partners, colleagues, and friends.
- A digital exhibit hall and the ability to meet one-on-one with exhibitors.
- Inspirational keynotes by leaders from the world stage including **Connie Hedegaard** from Denmark (at the E/A track opening session), and exciting entertainment events (e.g. **Sheryl Crow Concert**).
- Stories from your peers that will help support transformation in your organization and community.

ICMA is offering 3 international regional tracks (in keeping with your respective time zones) for the first time in addition to the regular conference sessions that will take on U.S time. This year to **reach out to a larger global audience, ICMA has created global content with speakers from all around the world (thanks to you and your members!) and waived the conference registration fee for all participants outside of North America (\$0 registration fee).**

We are also very proud to share that our Director, Manvita Baradi, will be presenting at the Asia Track Opening Session - 'Value of Being Connected Globally and Partnering with ICMA' on September 25, 7:30 - 8:30 am IST. She will also be moderating the Asia Track for the session - 'Leadership and Management during a Crisis' with Vijay Nehra and others on September 25, 9:45 - 10:30 am IST. Our Deputy Director, Meghna Malhotra, will also be presenting at the Europe/Africa Track for the session 'Resilient and Inclusive Cities' on September 23, 5:45 - 6:30 pm IST.

For more details, you can register at <https://unite.icma.org/registration/>

In case of any difficulties, feel free to contact us on Twitter, Facebook or info@umcasia.org



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