

# Community Speaks

HCL-F Supported SOCHARA WASH Project



*Colourful Rangolis made by Community members*

## Foreword

SOCHARA in partnership with HCL-Foundation is contributing to combat COVID-19 pandemic by focusing on WASH challenges in urban poor localities, schools in Bangalore and police clubs in Chennai with various activities. On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanthi, this month we conducted a mass programme called "Cleanliness Drive" in Mayabazar slum community supported by Viveknagara police station, BBMP, and community. During the COVID 19 times we learnt that partnerships are essential to gain the confidence of community and to address various challenges faced by the community. During the cleanliness drive we experienced the ownership of the activity from the community, as 85 + people cleaned

the slum and put rangoli. Officials from police department and BBMP visited the locality and appreciated the activity. We plan to continue with cleanliness activities in the coming months. Our Chennai team also conducted series of field visits to police clubs to understand the situation at the police clubs.

We are thankful to HCL-F team from Bengaluru and Chennai office for guiding and supporting us in working towards achieving SDG goal No.6 ***"Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all"***

Mr Prahlad I M  
Co- coordinator, SOCHARA, Bangalore

## Activities

- Need Based Assesment of Toilet Construction at 7 Police clubs in Chennai.
- Awareness Program at Police club.
- Toilet Construction in Thimmaraya School at Anekal, Bangalore.
- 6 Black Spots Cleaned in Maya bazar, Bangalore.
- Cleanliness Drive at Maya bazar, Bangalore.
- 24 Community Meetings in Mayabazar and Anandapuram, Bangalore.
- 4 Awareness programs in Mayabazar and Anandapuram in Bangalore.

# Bangalore Updates

Mr Mallesh K M , SOCHARA, Bangalore



## *Infra-Structure Development*

This month we focused on toilet construction in project schools. Toilet building work in Thimmaraya Swamy School in Bahadurpura, Anekal, was inaugurated with Bhoomi pooja on Wednesday, 14.10.2020. Mr. Gurumurthy, Mr. Prahalad and Prema from SOCHARA and Thimmaraya Swamy school staff attended the event. 3 toilets for girls and 2 for boys along with 3 urinals for boys are being built with the support from HCL-F in this school. At the time of reporting this activity, work is in progress and is supervised by Prema, field coordinator and Mallesh, research and training assistant.



## *Black spots cleaning*

Mayabazar locality has many garbage dumping places which can become a health hazard. As a part of Gandhi Jayanthi month activities, we initiated the cleaning of these black spots with the help of sanitation workers. The objective was to encourage the community members to keep their surroundings clean and reinforce the importance of cleanliness. Mr. Chidanand, BBMP health inspector supported the activity and sent sanitation workers to Mayabazar on 15th October and again on 22nd October to clear the 6 black spots in various parts of Mayabazar. Jyothi, SOCHARA field coordinator, coordinated the activity. This activity is an ongoing one and along with it we have planned community awareness programs for waste management and the health effects of unclean surroundings. We at SOCHARA are thankful to BBMP for the continuing support.



# Chennai Updates

Ms Srilakshmi, SOCHARA, Chennai

## Sanitation and Sheer Spirit

The HCL- F supported SOCHARA WASH project team conducted a situational analysis in Chennai police clubs. The team visited 7 police clubs with a mason to conduct an assessment of the space and specifications for toilet construction. Along with the inspection of the space, came the stories of how police clubs have evolved into something greater than just an activity center, a space for exploration of ideas and interests of young minds! We saw how interactions became participatory in nature with the club representatives actively giving suggestions on construction of borewells and hand wash systems for better sanitation. Sitting amidst individuals like Scout Master of Chintadripet police club, who work tirelessly to uplift their own community, we learned about the history of the club and the river Cooum where it is situated. We came to know that most of these clubs, despite having limited infrastructure and other facilities, work tirelessly to engage with the youth in terms of sports and cultural activities daily. Even though some of the activities are stalled because of the pandemic, students still access the space for academic purpose and other activities.



## A game a day keeps the germs away!

We kick started our hygiene awareness programme by conducting a few fun activities teaching the children on hand washing and hygiene. We initiated the programme in Chintadripet Police Club under the supervision of Scout Master in which 10 children participated. Children were fascinated to learn about proper hand washing techniques through the 'gloves activity' where a student volunteer was given a latex glove to wear, which was colored to represent areas where germs tend to abound. Later, proper hand washing steps were recited to the children and demonstrated along. We played the 'disease game' where we first wrote down a few disease names on the blackboard and discussed it with them in Tamil. Later, they were asked to identify the diseases that can be prevented by proper hand hygiene. Some of the participants were eager to find out the answers, as we reinstated the cause for such diseases. Children were optimistic and believed that they would be able to control the pandemic if everyone practiced personal hygiene. We understood that no limitations were going to stop them from working towards a change, and that is when it felt great to facilitate and contribute towards this change as a team. As Scout Master Robert would put it, ***'It is through the welfare of these children that we uplift our own community'***.



# Cleanliness Drive in Mayabazar, Bangalore

Dr Radhika Kaulgud, SOCHARA, Bangalore.

COVID -19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of basic hygiene and sanitation. Mahatma Gandhi too valued cleanliness as it is most important for physical well-being and a healthy environment. On the occasion of Gandhi Jayanthi month, the community members of Mayabazar initiated a cleanliness drive on 15th October 2020 in which they were supported by the local municipality (BBMP), the area police station (Viveknagara) and SOCHARA -HCL-F team members.

As a part of the cleanliness drive, the community members organized a rangoli competition in which the participants cleaned the front of their homes and put beautiful and colourful rangolis.

The field volunteers ensured that there is maximum participation from the community. SOCHARA HCL-F team members supported them by organising street plays for community mobilization.

The street plays also helped in creating awareness regarding clean surroundings, waste management etc. BBMP health inspector, police sub-inspector from the area police station (Viveknagara) and SOCHARA team member were the judges of the rangoli competition.

The cleanliness drive received an over-whelming response and more than 85 community members participated in the rangoli competition.

It was heartening to see the enthusiasm with which they participated in the event. Everyone was charged, the energy and the excitement in the air was palpable.


This event was a perfect example of community initiative and participation as well as inter-sectoral coordination between the government departments, civil society organization and community members. This event was the beginning of an ongoing initiative of keeping the surroundings clean and we are receiving continuous support from BBMP.



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