



TOWARDS CITY WIDE SANITATION

National Urban Sanitation Policy Rating of Cities 2010 Towards city wide sanitation



The government of India launched its national urban sanitation policy in November 2008 with the goal of making India “community-driven, totally sanitized, healthy and livable cities and towns”.

Considerable progress has been made in the implementation of National Urban Sanitation Policy in India since its launch in 2008. This includes formulation of state sanitation strategies for Maharashtra, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh while 12 more states are in the process of drafting their strategies. The Ministry of Urban Development and external agencies¹ have provided funds to support cities to prepare city sanitation plans (CSPs) and 120 cities are in the process of doing so. Several state governments, institutes, NGOs and international agencies are partners in this effort.

In order to recognize excellent performance in promoting urban sanitation, the Government of India has instituted a rating of cities on urban sanitation indicators based on which best performers will be awarded the 'Nirmal Shahar Puraskar' at a national ceremony. The ratings aim to improve public health and environmental standards as two outcomes that cities must seek to ensure for their citizens. In doing so, governments need to plan and implement holistic city-wide sanitation plans, thereby put in place processes that help reach outputs pertaining to safe collection, treatment and disposal. The rating will not recognize mere inputs, hardware or expenditure incurred in urban sanitation but will assess how these have led to achievements of intermediate milestones².

Concept of Totally Sanitized Cities

A totally sanitized city will be one that has achieved the outputs or milestones specified in the National Urban Sanitation policy, the salient features of which are as follows:

- Cities must be open-defecation free and provide access to toilets for poor people.
- Must eliminate the practice of manual scavenging and provide adequate personnel protection equipment that addresses safety of sanitation workers.
- All wastewater should be safely collected, treated and disposed.
- Recycle/reuse of treated wastewater for non-potable purposes should be implemented wherever possible.
- Solid waste collected and disposed safely.
- Services to the poor and systems for sustaining results.
- Improved public health outcomes and environmental standards.

¹ GTZ, JICA, UN-HABITAT, USAID, WSP.

² For more details refer to the National Urban Sanitation Policy.



The Ministry of Urban Development has provided Rs. 13 Crore to support cities to prepare City Sanitation Plans (CSPs). As a result of additional support from States, External Support Agencies and NGOs, 120 cities are in the process of preparing their City Sanitation Plans.

Each city has been scored under 19 indicators which are divided into three categories of Output (50 points), Process (30 points) and Outcome indicators (20 points).

The methodology was designed incorporating the comments received from state governments and after approval from the National Advisory Group on Urban Sanitation. Standardized methods for measurements and scoring and the sampling varied according to size classes⁵.

The five zones were assigned to three agencies to carry out the rating after a competitive selection process by an independent evaluation committee. These were:

- AC Nielsen ORG MARG: North zone, Central and South Central zone
- Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT): West Zone
- Development Research Services (DRS): South, East and North East zone

Each agency followed the prescribed methodology, while data was collected from cities in a consultative and collaborative manner. This included collection of data from the ULBs and was supplemented by field visits and observations. Based on the scores for output, process and outcome indicators, cities were then classified under four color categories. (Refer to Table 3)

Table 3: City Color Codes: Categories

No.	Category	Description	Points
1	Red	Cities needing immediate remedial action	< 33
2	Black	Needing considerable improvement	34-66
3	Blue	Recovering	67-90
4	Green	Healthy and clean city	91-100

⁵ For details refer to Annexure III, National Urban Sanitation Policy and for the methodology refer to the Ministry of Urban Development website.



Preliminary Results and Next Steps

- The national rating exercise will be carried out periodically. It is designed as a self assessment tool to encourage cities to prioritize the achievement of outcomes. Being the first round, this rating exercise also sets out the baseline to measure achievements in the future. Cities need to use these results to prioritize areas of improvement by developing and implementing city sanitation plans as well as to raise the awareness of city stakeholders (households, establishments, industries, municipal functionaries, media, etc.)
- The preliminary results of the rating show that every two of five cities are in the red category; and more than half fall currently in the black category. There are a handful of cities in the blue category. This signals the challenges that cities are facing, as well as the opportunity for improvements in the future.
- **Access to community/ public toilets, elimination of manual scavenging and open-defecation:** It is excellent to note that almost all cities report complete elimination of manual scavenging. However, improvements are required to improve access to community and public toilets for the urban poor and to stop open-defecation.
- **Safe management of human excreta:** More than 50 cities report 90 percent or above safe collection of human excreta, showing that improvements in this area can be achieved by the rest of the cities. However, wastewater treatment poses considerable challenges - 380 cities collect and treat less than 40 percent of their human excreta, but there are nearly six cities that treat more than 90 percent of their human excreta. More than 40 cities also report recycling and reuse of wastewater for non-potable applications after treatment (more than 20 percent).
- **Solid waste collection and treatment:** Twenty four cities report collecting more than 80 percent of their solid wastes, another six show an outstanding performance of nearly 100 percent primary collection. While treatment is a big challenge for most, 17 cities are treating at least 60 percent of their wastes.
- **Good process indicators:** Most cities appear to have performed well in the process indicators, especially the larger cities.

Summary

The National Urban Sanitation Policy has set its goal high and the development of state sanitation strategies and city sanitation plans as an integral step in the process of improving urban sanitation. Priority must be accorded to urban sanitation and it is opportune to target improvements using software and hardware resources which are available from local, state and national sources and programs. This rating exercise serves as a baseline for self assessment of cities, and highlights the areas where improvements are required. The rating is meant to serve as a catalyst to states and cities to create more awareness on sanitation and its impact on public health and the quality of its water resources. However it is not sufficient to target mere infrastructure and the success of any plan must be measured by the outcome it achieves by way of public health improvements. The goal of achieving Nirmal Shahars must be done in a consultative and participatory manner and it is essential to involve all stakeholders, especially the households. Households must be encouraged to become active partners in the up-keep, health and quality of life that the city offers to its citizens.





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The Water and Sanitation Program provided the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India with technical support and guidance for designing the methodology for the rating of cities.

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