

Women in Total Sanitation Campaign: A Case Study from Yavatmal District, Maharashtra, India

Geeta Pardeshi

*Department of Preventive and Social Medicine, Government Medical College,
Akola 444 001, Maharashtra, India
E-mail: geetashrikar@yahoo.com*

KEYWORDS Environment. Gender. Rural. Sanitation

ABSTRACT It is assumed that a woman's perspective can contribute a great deal to improve planning, functioning and utilization of the sanitary facilities. This case study describes the roles and responsibilities of women in TSC implemented in Yavatmal. The study was conducted in four *Nirmal Gram Villages* in December 2006. Quantitative (house to house survey), qualitative (Focus group discussions) and participatory rapid appraisal technique (transect walks) were used to conduct the study. Women had played important roles as beneficiaries, targets and resources for the campaign. The women described benefits at individual, family and community level. Only 18 out of the 55 Women Latrine Complexes were functional, a majority of which were noted to be of poor quality and lacking in maintenance and cleanliness. The community and administration acknowledged the vital role of women in achieving the goals of TSC. Women were considered to be important target groups in IEC and training activities. Women performed varied roles as fund raisers, motivators, initiators, surveillance workers and implementers. In the post TSC phase women were mainly responsible for the cleanliness and maintenance of the household latrines. After achieving the goal of open defaecation free villages, women in only one village were involved in some development activities. In the remaining villages the women had stopped attending local meetings and had returned back to household chores.