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## **Chapter - I : Introduction**

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## **CHAPTER - I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 MAGNITUDE OF THE PROBLEM**

##### **1.1.1 Background**

Sanitation includes management of liquid and solid waste, personal, domestic and environmental hygiene. As human settlements grew and the cities expanded, the sanitation problem increased. In some ancient cities like Harappa and Mohenjodaro, well laid out drainage and street system were in existence.

In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and even today, open defecation is practiced in both rural and urban India. In urban areas open ditches, pit latrines and bucket system were used. The dehumanizing practice of removal of night soil by human hands was also prevalent. The antiquated sanitation system (bucket latrine) in India used scavengers drawn from the downtrodden communities to carry the buckets, which undermined their social position in society and health. The first sanitation bill in India was introduced in 1878 which made the construction of toilets compulsory and also proposed the construction of public toilets.

Mahatma Gandhi laid the foundation for a rural sanitation movement by establishing the 'Harijan Sevak Sangh' for the liberation of scavengers. Subsequent to this, on October 15, 1947, a private member bill was moved in Greater Bombay to abolish the practice of manual scavenging. This was followed by the setting up of several commissions and debates in Parliament. The major recommendations contained in a commission report were circulated by the Government of India to the state governments for wider application in 1955. It was in 1954 that the rural sanitation programme was introduced for the first time in India.

##### **1.1.2 Introduction of Centrally Sponsored Scheme (Third Five Year Plan for Rehabilitation & Resettlement of Scavengers)**

In 1956, Government of India constituted a Central Advisory Board for Harijan Welfare. The Board reviewed the working and living conditions of scavengers in the country and recommended introducing a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for liberation and rehabilitation of scavengers. The scheme was introduced in the Third Five Year Plan. However, this

scheme failed and was discontinued during the Fifth Five Year Plan following the realization that the practice of scavenging was inextricably linked to the evils of a stratified social structure.

### **1.1.3 Strengthening Rural & Urban Water Supply and Sanitation (Sixth Five Year Plan)**

Since the beginning of the Sixth five year plan (1980-85) and the launch of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade in 1980, India has been strengthening its effort for rural and urban water supply and sanitation. During the decade 1980-90, it was aimed to cover eighty per cent of the urban population through proper sanitation facilities and eradicate manual scavenging.

### **1.1.4 Reliance on Subsidy (Seventh Five Year Plan)**

During seventh five year plan (1988-92), a new programme of sanitation was introduced at the village level for health centers, schools and anganwadis. Individual household latrines were also constructed under this programme. The factors which came in the way of implementation of the programme was low priority given to sanitation by the State Governments and the people in general, low emphasis on Information, Education and Communication, promotion of single model, that is twin pit pour flush latrines, heavy reliance on subsidy and lack of motivation efforts. It was soon realized that investment and subsidies alone would not ensure improved coverage of sanitation.

### **1.1.5 Discontinuation of Subsidies and Inclusion of User's Responsibility (Eight Five Year Plan)**

Safe drinking water supply and basic sanitation formed vital component of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97). Subsidies were discontinued except for the households living below poverty line. The new dimensions in this plan were to include user responsibility for the operation and maintenance of facilities, and allowing local bodies to charge for sanitation services. Though the Eighth Five Year Plan target was to cover 5 percent rural population with sanitation facilities, the progress was hardly 4 percent of the target in 1996.

To fill the gap, the Government of India made a paradigm shift from a supply driven to a demand driven approach through reform programme of rural water supply and sanitation (RWSS). The aim of the programme was to generate more demand responsive and

participatory approaches by empowering local governments and community groups to fully manage their own services.

### **1.1.6 Eradication of Manual Scavenging (Ninth Five Year Plan)**

The Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) emphasized the need for undertaking all possible measures for rapid expansion and improvement of sanitation facilities in urban and rural areas. At that time, it was estimated that 20 percent of the households would be provided with sanitary facilities through Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) that was entrusted to the Ministry of Rural Development way back in 1986. The programme guidelines were revised in March 1991 and further in March 1993. The guidelines included the amendment of an appropriate mix of central and state investments, institutional finance, strengthening of operation and maintenance and more importantly the involvement of communities at various stages of programme implementation. The main objective of the scheme was to eradicate manual scavenging by converting all existing dry latrines in rural areas into low cost sanitary latrines.

### **1.1.7 Total Eradication of Manual Scavenging (Tenth Five Year Plan)**

The Tenth Five Year Plan also envisaged taking all possible measures for rapid expansion and improvement of sanitation facilities in urban areas with local participation. The issue was accorded immense importance by the Prime Minister also in his Independence Day speech on 15 August, 2002 wherein he announced that the Government would amalgamate all the different schemes presently being run by Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Ministry of Rural Development and Ministry of Urban Development for speeding up the liberation and rehabilitation of Scavengers.

### **1.1.8 Challenges Ahead**

In pursuance of importance given by the Prime Minister, the Planning Commission has prepared a National Action Plan (NAP) for total eradication of manual scavenging by 2007. The target date to make the country scavenger free by March 2007 (as per the National Action Plan) has been extended to December 2007. Although many states have confirmed scavenger free status in various review meetings at the center and even provided affidavit in the Honorable Supreme Court, data provided to HUDCO do not provide a clear picture. The completion reports of the schemes have not been submitted by the respective states despite several reminders to the implementing agencies. Despite concerted efforts and investment of huge resources, and some achievements, the challenges are many.

## 1.2 THE INTEGRATED LOW COST SANITATION SCHEME

With the mandate to eliminate the dehumanizing practice of physically carrying night soil, the centrally sponsored scheme of Urban Integrated Low Cost Sanitation was initiated in 1981 by the Ministry of Home Affairs and later implemented through the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment. From 1989-90, it came to be operated through the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation and is being implemented by Ministry of Urban Housing and Poverty Alleviation since 2003-04. The basic objectives of the scheme are to :

- (i) Convert the existing dry latrines into low cost water seal pour flush latrines;
- (ii) Construct new sanitary units in those households which practiced open defecation; and
- (iii) Provide alternative employment to the liberated scavengers who were earlier engaged in removal of night soil from the dry latrines.

### 1.2.1 Components of the Scheme

The components related to conversion of dry latrines and construction of new latrines is being dealt by the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) on a whole town basis by providing a mix of subsidy and loan from the HUDCO.

The component related to rehabilitation of liberated scavengers is being dealt by the Ministry of Welfare & Social Justice, Government of India. A new scheme for rehabilitation of scavengers is on anvil and the development of a training framework for liberated scavengers is being closely monitored by the Prime Minister. The AFC has been closely involved in the preparation of the training framework.

### 1.2.2 Criteria for Selection of Towns

Under ILCSS, towns are selected from States and Union Territories based on their urban population and the extent of prevalence of manual scavenging. Priority is given to those towns, which have a predominance of dry latrines or where open defecation takes place, and there is existence of large scavenger's population.

Scheme is applicable to only small and medium towns having a population not exceeding five lakhs as per 1981 census.

### 1.2.3 Pattern of Assistance

Under the scheme, HUDCO is providing subsidy and loan for the construction of sanitary latrine up to the sub structure. The quantum of loan and subsidy portion are based on the income of the beneficiaries with the objective to provide subsidies to lower income groups only as per the following financial pattern<sup>1</sup>:

**Table-1.1 : Funding pattern under ILCS scheme**

Category	Subsidy	Loan	Beneficiary Contribution
<b>EWS</b>	45%	50%	5%
<b>LIG</b>	25%	60%	15%
<b>MIG/HIG</b>	Nil	75%	25%

It is also envisaged that central subsidy portion would be restricted to the limits as mentioned above. However, if the State Government so desires, they may subsidize the beneficiary contribution on the loan component in order to reduce the burden on beneficiaries.

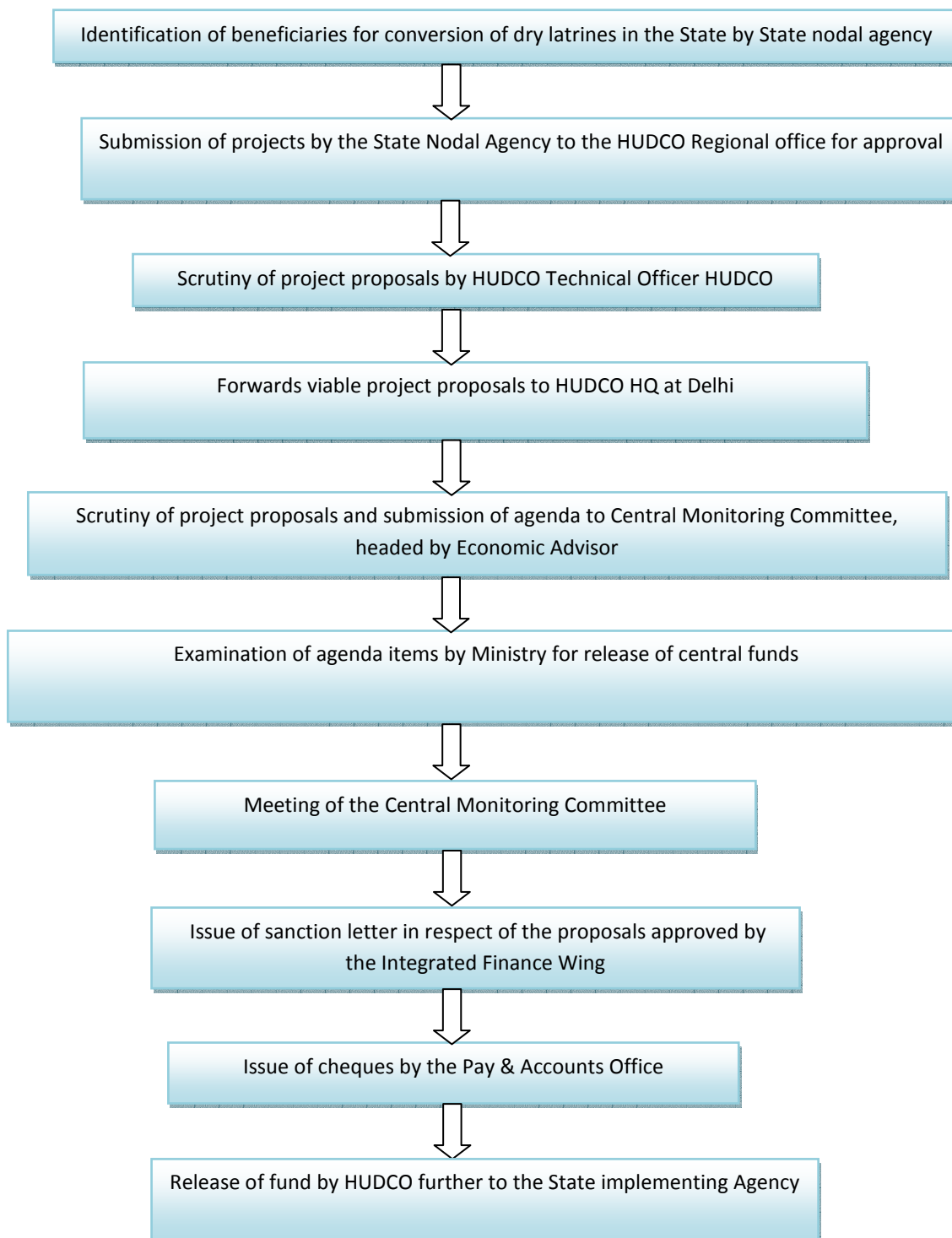
The loan and subsidy are routed through State officials and regional offices of HUDCO in order to extend subsidies and loans simultaneously in the proportions mentioned above in installments in tune with the actual physical progress and expenditure.

HUDCO's loan is extended at 10% interest repayable over 7 years. The borrowing agencies have to ensure the timely recovery of the loan component from the beneficiaries. The unit cost for different categories of sanitary latrines is as follows:-

- ✓ 5 users unit Rs 4000/-
- ✓ 10 users unit Rs 6000/-
- ✓ 15 users unit Rs 7000/-

<sup>1</sup> As per HUDCO document

### 1.2.4 Implementation Mechanism



### 1.2.5 Budget Allocation & Expenditure under ILCS Programme

In the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan, an amount of Rs. 200 crore was allocated for the scheme. The details of amount released year-wise during the 10<sup>th</sup> Plan is given below:

**Table-1.2 : Budget allocation under ILCS**

10 <sup>th</sup> Plan Period	Subsidy released (Rs. Crore)	No. of units constructed/ converted
2002-03	4.80	194927
2003-04	4.80	31993
2004-05	20.00	186316
2005-06 <sup>2</sup>	2.00	188052
<b>Total</b>	<b>31.60</b>	<b>6,01,288</b>

## 1.3 THE STUDY

**1.3.1** Ministry of Urban Housing and Poverty Alleviation commissioned the Agricultural Finance Corporation Ltd. to conduct an Evaluation and Impact Assessment of Urban Integrated Low Cost Sanitation (ILCS Scheme). The specific question addressed is how far the scheme has been able to achieve the goal of liberation of scavengers, conversion of dry latrines in to pour flush latrines and construction of new latrines by households which never had one.

The objectives of the study are as follows :

- The magnitude of the problem of dry latrines/manual scavengers in the country
- A critical performance/ appraisal of ILCSS since inception of the scheme
- Identify the bottlenecks/hurdles in the implementation of the scheme, if any, and suggestions for removal
- The difficulties that are being faced by potential beneficiaries in availing the benefits under the scheme

<sup>2</sup> In 2006-07, three schemes have been sanctioned to Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh and Manipur with subsidy of Rs. 20127.20 lakhs for construction/conversion of 784332 units. The Ministry has released Rs 2500 lakhs to HUDCO for disbursement and in turn HUDCO has so far released Rs.470.4 lakhs to the various State agencies.

- Suggestion for alternative models of implementation
- Financial requirements for the scheme and the criteria for state-wise allocation and fixing of physical targets

### 1.3.2 Sampling Design

A multi-staged sampling procedure was adopted for the evaluation study, with region in the first stage, state in the second stage, town in the third stage, FGD with the community in the fourth stage and beneficiaries household and scavengers household in the fifth stage.

The sample selection is based on random and stratified random basis. It was initially agreed by the officials of HUDCO and MOUHPA that fifteen states will be selected from five regions.

**Stage 1 :** The entire country was divided into five zones, namely, north, west, south, east and north-east

**Stage 2 :** Criteria for selection of States:

- In north, all states except Himachal Pradesh were selected
- In south, all states except Kerala were selected
- In the West, all States except Gujarat and Goa were selected,
- In east, all states except Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh were selected
- In north-east, only Assam was selected

The selection of States was done in consultation with the officials from MOUHPA and HUDCO.

**Stage 3 :** Criteria for selection of City/Towns:

The Selection of City/towns was based on the following parameters:

- Scheme selected between 1995 – 2005
- Maximum number of units converted
- Significant presence of scavengers
- Severity of social and implementation problems as assessed by HUDCO

**Stage 4 :** Ward Selection: Three wards were selected randomly as identified by the nodal agency with the community in the fourth stage and beneficiaries household and scavengers household in the fifth stage.

**Stage 5 :** Beneficiary Sample : A person who borrowed money from the implementing agencies under the HUDCO managed loan scheme to either construct a new latrine or convert his/her existing latrine into a new sanitary latrine was defined as beneficiary. A total of 50 beneficiaries per sample ward (150 per town) was proposed to selected randomly for interview.

**Stage 6 :** Traditional Sanitation Worker Sample : A total of 20 scavengers per ward, if scavenger population was available in the ward was selected randomly.

### 1.3.3 Sample Size

As per the original sampling design drawn up in consultation with the ministry, the study was to be carried out in one town each from 15 states equally distributed in five geographical regions. The sample was discussed in the meeting at the office of Joint Secretary, Ministry of Urban Housing and Poverty Alleviation, Government of India on 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2007. In case of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow was selected in addition to Dasna (Ghaziabad) as advised by the Joint Secretary. In Bihar, Thakurganj, was initially proposed in the sample, however, as per advice of the Joint Secretary, Patna was selected in place of Thakurganj.

During the Review Meeting on the Draft Interim Report on 15<sup>th</sup> June,2007 , the Joint Secretary requested to revise the sample size by including Gorakhpur town of Uttar Pradesh and Maner and Danapur towns around Patna in Bihar. Accordingly, these towns were further included in the study. As per discussion with the concerned states, it was revealed by the officials in Bihar, that no ILCS scheme was implemented in the State since 1996.

In Maner and Danapur the programme for conversion and construction of latrines was never taken up. Neither did liberation of scavengers take place under the scheme. This fact was communicated to the ministry vide letter no. AFC:NRO:ILCS: 2007/909, dated 20<sup>th</sup> June 2007. Therefore, for these towns interviews could not take place with “beneficiaries” and only Focus Group Discussions with the community could be done.

Table-1.3 : Details of Scheme-wise Sample Towns

SI No	Zone	States	Town	Implementation Status
1	North	Uttarakhand	Dehradun (Scheme no. 17597)	Units sanctioned – 2106, units converted – 2101, No of scavengers 29, Implementing agency – DUDA
2		Uttar Pradesh	Ghaziabad (Scheme no. 17294)	No. of units sanctioned – 54060, No. of units converted – 5915, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 350, No. of scavengers liberated – 168, Implementing Agency – DUDA
			Lucknow (Scheme no. 17040)	Total number of units converted – 7000, number of scavengers to be liberated – 75. Implementing Agency – DUDA
			Gorakhpur (Scheme no. 17295)	Total number of units converted – 2160, Implementing Agency- DUDA Total number of units, Total no. of scavengers- Nil Total number of conversion in progress – 1200 units
3		Punjab	Moga (Scheme no. 12364)	No. of units sanctioned – 3010, No. of units converted – 3010, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 166, No. of scavengers liberated – 166, Implementing Agency – PWS&SB
4	Haryana	Yamunanagar (Scheme no. 12577)	No. of units sanctioned – 7495, No. of units converted – 1380, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 244, No. of scavengers liberated – NA, Implementing Agency – HSCB	
5	J & K	Akhnoor (Scheme no. 17967)	No. of units sanctioned – Nil, No. of units converted – 2518, No. of scavengers to be liberated – Nil, No. of new units constructed – 813, Implementing Agency – Jammu Municipality . 100% UC received	
6	West	Rajasthan	Rawatbhata, (Scheme no. 17250)	No. of units sanctioned – 3000, No. of units converted – 3000, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 35, No. of scavengers liberated – 35, Progress – 25% (Agency – DLB, Rajasthan)
7		Maharashtra	Udgir, dist - Latur (Scheme no. 10614)	No. of units sanctioned – 1490, No. of units converted – 786, scavengers free Progress –25% Agency – Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran
8		MP	Gwalior (Scheme no. 17595)	No. of units sanctioned – 26613, No. of units converted – 26102, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 195, No. of scavengers liberated – 195, Progress – 100%
9	South	Karnataka	Tumkur (Scheme no. 9381)	No. of units sanctioned – 3101, No. of units converted – 934, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 113, No. of scavengers liberated – 60, Progress – 50%, Agency –Tumkur Municipality
10		Tamil Nadu	Tiruchirapalli (Scheme no. 13408)	No. of units sanctioned – 1050, No. of units converted – 1291, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 175, No. of scavengers liberated – NA, Progress – Nil, Agency – TFIUDCO
11		Andhra Pradesh	Ramagundam, Dist. – Karimnagar )Scheme no. 16791)	No. of units sanctioned – 3353, No. of units converted – 3353, scavengers free (Progress – 100%) Agency – CDMA
12	East	Bihar	Patna (Scheme No. 12277) but scheme was not implemented	No ILCS programme implemented
			Maner No ILCS scheme implemented	-do-
			Danapur, No ILCS scheme implemented	-do-
13	Orissa	Parlekhamundi, Dist.- Gajapati (Scheme no. 12854)	No. of units sanctioned – 1232, No. of units converted – NA, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 26, No. of scavengers liberated – NA, Progress – 0%, Agency – Parlekhemundi Municipality	
14	West Bengal	Jalpaiguri (scheme no. 17247)	No. of units sanctioned – 7558, No. of units converted – 7558, No. of scavengers to be liberated – 624, No. of scavengers liberated – 409, Progress – 100% Agency - SUDA	
15	North east	Assam	Tinsukia (Scheme no. 12086)	No. of units sanctioned – 2788, No. of units converted – 186, scavengers free Progress – 25%, Agency – Tinsukia Municipal Board

The expected sample size to be covered under various tools is given below in **Table-1.4**.

**Table-1.4 : Sample Size and Study Tools**

Sl. No.	Target respondent	Tools with identification No	Unit	Quantity
1	Beneficiaries schedule	AFC:ILCS:IMPACT:1	50 per ward	3 wards in a town and in 16 towns
2	Traditional Sanitation Worker schedule	AFC:ILCS:IMPACT:2	20 per ward	3 wards in a town and in 16 towns
3	Focus group discussion	AFC:ILCS:IMPACT:3	1 per ward	3 per town and in 19 towns
4	Checklist for Civic body	AFC:ILCS:IMPACT:4	1 per town	16 towns
5	Checklist for State Urban Development Authority (SUDA)	AFC:ILCS:IMPACT:5	1 per state	15 states
6	Checklist for HUDCO Regional Officials	AFC:ILCS:IMPACT:6	1 per state	15 states

#### 1.3.4 Data Collection Tools

The details of tools used are given below :

##### (i) Beneficiary Schedule

The schedule aimed to know the coverage of target group benefitted, Socio-economic profile of the target beneficiary, literacy level, occupation details, income category, nature of dwelling, type of unit (new /conversion), usage of latrine, expenditure on low cost unit and repayment of loan, opinion about the scheme & improvement in quality of life.

##### (ii) Traditional Sanitation Worker's Schedule:

This schedule was used to seek information from those who were earlier involved in manual scavenging or presently working with urban local bodies. The information sought contained socio-economic profile, nature of dwelling, household composition, literacy level, income, occupation details, change in occupation, income category, registration with Civic Body/

Municipal Corporation, awareness about rehabilitation package, assistance received from the government, problem in securing assistance, alternative arrangements / occupation, adoption of hygiene practices , improvement in quality of life etc.

**(iii) Check-list for State Nodal Agency**

This check-list aimed to understand the implementation mechanism of ILCS scheme at state level. Sanitation status, implementation process, status of the conversion of dry latrine (completed, in progress or yet to be converted), fund allocation (loan, subsidy & beneficiary's contribution), number of scavengers, steps taken to promote ILCS, status of utilisation certificate, bottlenecks in implementation and suggestions for future action plan.

**(iv) Check-list for HUDCO Regional Offices**

The check list aims to collect the information on fund allocation (Subsidies & Loan), mechanism adopted for monitoring & supervision, Status of utilization certificate, difficulties being faced, alternative delivery mechanism, etc.

**(v) Check-list for Focus Group Discussion**

Focus Group Discussion checklist aimed to know awareness about the Prohibition of Dry Latrines Act 1993, availability of subsidy and loan, usage of latrines, acceptance of technology, occupation details of the liberated scavengers, improvement in quality of life among the beneficiaries and scavengers. Some interesting case studies have come out of focus group discussions and are presented in the report.

**(vi) Check-list for Civic Body**

The Check-list aims to understand the implementation mechanism followed, awareness generation attempt, capacity building and orientation of the beneficiaries and suggestion.

### 1.3.5 Actual Sample Size

Actual sample coverage is given below:

**Table-1.5: Details of sample size covered under the study**

State and towns			Actual Sample Size under ILCS	
Sl. No.	State Name	Town Name	Beneficiary	Scavenger
1	Assam	Tinsukia	155	60
2	Andhra Pradesh	Ramagundam	132	11
3	Bihar	Patna	0*	59
		Maner	0 *	0*
		Danapur	0 *	0*
4	Haryana	Yamunanagar	150	60
5	Jammu	Akhnoor	149	3
6	Karnataka	Tumkur	128	8
7	MP	Gwalior	150	20
8	Maharashtra	Udgir	150	60
9	Orissa	Parlekhemundi	150	24
10	Punjab	Moga	150	60
11	Rajasthan	Rawatbhata	151	Nil
12	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	150	60
		Dasna	152	10
		Gorakhpur	74	56
13	Uttaranchal	Dehradun	150	60
14	Tamilnadu	Tiruchirapalli	151	30
15	West Bengal	Jalpaiguri	150	60
<b>Total Sample Size</b>			<b>2292</b>	<b>641</b>

\* Scheme not implemented, hence no beneficiary. Actual sample size was lower than designed size as in many places scavengers were not available or traceable

\*\* As per list provided by urban local bodies

NP – Not provided

### 1.3.6 Secondary Research

Secondary information was collected to develop an understanding of the programmes in all sample states by collection of data from Ministry of Urban Housing and Poverty Alleviation and HUDCO Delhi office. Apart from this the secondary data from HUDCO regional offices, State Nodal bodies and town bodies were also collected to know the

implementation mechanism of the scheme (state-wise), mapping capacity of the stakeholders, availability of funds, problems faced by the nodal agency, implementing body and funding organisations, utilisation of funds etc. The secondary information was required for planning of the primary research.

### 1.3.7 Limitations

- In Uttar Pradesh, due to Assembly poll, the scheduled tour programme had to be postponed at the request of District Magistrate, Ghaziabad. Accordingly, the field work started after the elections.
- In Parlekhemundi town of Orissa, despite the pre-communication of the team's arrival, no concerned officer except a peon was available. Therefore the team had to wait for 3 days which disturbed the entire tour plan.
- In Ramagundam town of Andhra Pradesh, the field visit had to be postponed to the last week of May, 2007 since there was indefinite strike of Municipal Corporation employees. The Commissioner, Ramagundam Municipality requested the team members to commence the work after the strike was called off.
- In the towns of Dasna, Akhnoor and Tumkur, the total number of scavengers either rehabilitated or other-wise is less than the proposed sample size of 60 (20 per ward x 3 wards per town). In the towns of Patna, Maner and Danapur, no list of scavengers was provided by the implementing agency. In these cases, the team identified the localities where sanitation workers were living, contacted their leaders and made direct contact
- In Dasna (Ghaziabad), the total number of scavengers was only 10 and all of them were weaned away from the job. All of them were covered under the study. In Akhnoor (Jammu) the number of liberated scavengers was only three and all three were contacted. In Tumkur (Karnataka) also there were only 10. Thus in these cities the planned sample size could not be covered.
- In Patna, Bihar Urban Development Authority did not implement the ILCS scheme. The non provision of list of beneficiaries and scavengers put tremendous pressure on the team and consumed lot of time to locate the target group.
- There was a lot of discrepancy between the data on progress provided by SUDA, DUDA and HUDCO. Data quality appeared problematic.

### 1.3.8 Report Outline

This Report has been organized into five chapters. The Introductory chapter is preceded by an Executive Summary and Chapter-II provides a more detailed review of various initiatives to address the problem, including recommendations of various Committees & Task Forces and Programmes launched country-wide to prevent use of dry latrines and liberate manual scavengers. It also describes magnitude of the problem, status of availability of latrines and type of latrines in the country. Chapter-II also describes and analyse the progress of ILCS based on the data received from HUDCO and MOUHPA.

Chapter-III provides a critical appraisal of the scheme. The broad aspects covered in the Chapter include :state level and town level delivery mechanism, actual progress achieved in terms of construction and conversion of dry latrines.

Chapter-IV gives an analysis of primary data on “beneficiaries” and Chapter-V provides impact of the scheme on scavengers.

## 1.4 SUMMING UP

- Sanitation is the basis of a healthy and civilized living and it along with access to safe drinking water, has been accepted as one of the components of human development. Absence of sanitation facilities lead to a large number of water-borne diseases.
- In India as many as 36 percent of the households do not have sanitary toilet. Of those having latrines, nearly 20 percent depend on “Service Latrines”, also known as dry latrines which require the services of people who have to manually remove the night soil. Those who use dry latrines and those who are engaged in the demeaning occupation of manually removing human excreta are exposed to innumerable health risks.
- The scavengers, also referred to by the more dignified term “sanitary workers”, come from the lower strata of society. Following the most uncleanest of occupations they are the lowest stratum of even the scheduled castes. They belong to castes like Bhangi, Valmiki, Thothi, etc. and have the lowest earnings and live in abominable conditions.

- Mahatma Gandhi had made the liberation and rehabilitation of scavengers as the corner stone of his social reform strategy. Independent India formulated several schemes to eradicate the evil of dry latrines and manual scavengers.
- The earlier subsidy oriented approach was replaced with the principle of the “beneficiaries” meeting at least part of the project cost to make it demand driven.
- For urban areas the integrated low cost sanitation programme, the flagship scheme implemented by MOUHPA in association with HUDCO and urban local bodies, is a major initiative that is expected to improve the standard of living in urban areas, particularly in small towns.
- Under the scheme, priority is given to those towns having large number of dry latrines and manual scavengers and wide prevalence of open defecation.
- Towns with a population not exceeding five lakhs as per 1981 census are selected for the Impact Evaluation of the project, thus the ceiling limit has been relaxed of late..
- This impact evaluation study is aimed to understand the magnitude of the problem, critically appraise the scheme, identify bottlenecks in implementation and assess the beneficiaries difficulties.
- The sampling methodology was designed through close interaction with MOUHPA and HUDCO and the final sample contained 19 towns, 51 town wards, 2292 households with converted/newly constructed latrines and 641 scavengers/ sanitation workers. Structured questionnaires, state level and town level checklists and FGDs were used by a team of trained researchers to collect primary and secondary data.
- A number of limitations were confronted by the team while doing field work, ranging from mismatch between secondary data, strikes by municipal employees during the study period, difficulty to obtain sufficient number of scavengers for the sample, non-implementation of programmes in Bihar State, etc.
- The team obtained excellent cooperation from state urban development agencies, urban local bodies and local residents. The study also evoked considerable interest in the local media and enthusiasm among the local residents.