

# Statewide Intensive Capacity Building Programs on **Occupational Safety and Dignity** of Sanitation Workers in Maharashtra



RCUES of AILSG Mumbai with UNICEF, Maharashtra under  
**Maharashtra Urban WASH-Environmental Sanitation Coalition**

**March 2024**



## Acknowledgement

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have contributed to the success of the 'State-wide Intensive Capacity Building Program for Sanitation Workers in Maharashtra on their Occupational Safety and Dignity.' This collaborative effort between the Swachh Bharat Mission of Urban Development Department and Water Supply and Sanitation Department of Government of Maharashtra, RCUES, Mumbai and UNICEF, Maharashtra would not have been possible without the dedication, expertise, and support of numerous individuals and development partners actively engaged at grass root level.

We are also grateful to all the sanitation workers who participated in this journey which is just a beginning to long term sustained change. Their active engagement, feedback, and commitment to applying the knowledge gained have been essential in demonstrating the program's impact and effectiveness. We express our sincere appreciation to the senior officials and technical experts of Government of Maharashtra for its proactive leadership and unwavering commitment to enhancing sanitation practices and worker welfare. Their vision and support have been instrumental in driving this initiative forward and ensuring its success. Special thanks are due to UNICEF, Maharashtra and Unilever-Domestos for their partnership and support in this endeavor. Their collaboration, guidance, and advocacy have been crucial in shaping the program and aligning it with national missions and initiatives aimed at promoting sanitation, health, and sustainable development. Additionally, we extend our heartfelt thanks to Director General, Dr. Jairaj Pathak, AIILSG and Chief of UNICEF Field Office for Maharashtra for their invaluable contributions and leadership throughout the implementation of this program.

We would like to acknowledge the efforts of all the Master Trainers (MTs) who participated in the program, as well as the Key Resource Persons (KRPs) who facilitated their training. Their dedication, enthusiasm, and expertise have been instrumental in equipping sanitation workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure their occupational safety and dignity.

We also extend our appreciation to the numerous organizations, professionals, and stakeholders who have supported and collaborated with us throughout the program.

Last but not least, we thank all those who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes to plan, coordinate, and execute the training program. Their dedication, hard work, and attention to detail have been crucial in ensuring the smooth implementation and success of the initiative. In conclusion, we recognize that the success of this program is the result of a collective effort and collaboration among various stakeholders. Moving forward, we remain committed to continuing our efforts to ensure the occupational safety, dignity, and empowerment of sanitation workers across Maharashtra.

Secretariat of Maharashtra Urban WASH & ES Coalition (Maha-UWES-C) at  
RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai

March 2024



**Maharashtra Urban WASH & Environmental Sanitation Coalition**, a joint initiative of RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai, and UNICEF, Mumbai Field Office, is a platform created to facilitate collaborative ideation and implementation of innovations in urban WASH and environmental sanitation. It aims to contribute to the State's journey towards achieving SDGs and the milestones under SBM 2.0 (Rural and Urban) and AMRUT 2.0 among the other development programmes and missions. This report captures the initiative undertaken in the form of creating Master Trainers to conduct trainings for Sanitation Workers across Maharashtra to safeguard their occupational safety and dignity.

## Secretariat of Maharashtra Urban WASH-ES Coalition



The secretariat acknowledges the dedication of the Master Trainers trained under the initiative, who stepped forward to provide training for sanitation workers. In addition to the trainings facilitated by RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai, several others were conducted in partnership with private organizations, NGOs, and various collaborators across diverse cities.

## Partners (Master Trainers)



## Executive Summary

The Government of Maharashtra, in collaboration with RCUES, Mumbai and UNICEF, Maharashtra has spearheaded a proactive initiative to enhance sanitation practices and worker welfare. The 'State-wide Intensive Capacity Building Program for Sanitation Workers in Maharashtra on their Occupational Safety and Dignity' reflects a strategic partnership aligning with Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 and other national missions. With the support of UNICEF and Unilever-Domestos, the program focuses on building capacities and empowering sanitation workers, contributing to public health, community welfare, and sustainable development goals. The two-phase approach involves training Master Trainers (MTs) and cascading this training to sanitation workers across Maharashtra, addressing critical gaps in occupational safety awareness.

The foundation of the program lies in an evidence-based strategy, emphasizing capacity building, dignity, and collaborative efforts. The training program, implemented in two phases, commenced with an intensive 3-day training for 246 Master Trainers from diverse backgrounds. These trainers, equipped with comprehensive knowledge, then conducted tailored training for 2164 sanitation workers across 12 districts in Maharashtra. The curriculum covered 16 interactive modules, including topics such as rights and entitlements, PPE usage, legal provisions, and health and hygiene. The impact of the program was significant, addressing the lack of prior comprehensive training for sanitation workers and empowering them through knowledge and dialogue.

The testimonies from Master Trainers and professionals involved underscore the program's effectiveness and comprehensive design. The training sessions, including interactive elements, practical demonstrations, and personalization, bridged critical gaps in sanitation workers' understanding. The second phase, focusing on training sanitation workers, further demonstrated the program's success in reaching diverse communities, including rural areas. The participants displayed a strong commitment to applying the acquired knowledge, highlighting the program's real-world impact.

The program's success is evident in its achievements, such as entering into MoUs with organizations, distributing PPE kits, and documenting inspirational stories of sanitation workers. However, recognizing the ongoing nature of the initiative, there is a continued need for targeted and comprehensive training programs, periodic evaluations, and partnerships for sustainability and scalability. By addressing gaps in training and awareness, Maharashtra can create an inclusive and supportive environment for sanitation workers, ensuring their safety, dignity, and empowerment in their crucial roles. The statewide intensive training program lays a solid foundation, emphasizing the importance of ongoing efforts to secure the occupational safety and dignity of sanitation workers across the state.



## Abbreviations

**AMRUT** - Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation

**CSO** – Civil Society Organisations

**CT/PT** – Community Toilets / Public Toilets

**DoECC** – Department of Environment and Climate Change

**GFC** - Garbage Free Cities

**GoM** - Government of Maharashtra

**JJM** - Jal Jeevan Mission

**KRP** - Key Resource Persons

**MoU** - Memorandum of Understanding

**MTs** - Master Trainers

**NULM** - National Urban Livelihood Mission

**NGO** - Non-Governmental Organization

**ODF** - Open Defecation Free

**PPE** - Personal protective equipment

**QR code** - Quick Response code

**RCUES** - The Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies

**SBM** - Swachh Bharat Mission

**SKP** - Swachhata Knowledge Partner

**SWs** - Sanitation Workers

**UNICEF** - United Nations Children's Fund

**UDD** – Urban Development Department

**ULB** - Urban Local Body

**WSSD** – Water Supply and Sanitation Department

**ZP** – Zilla Parishad



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# Statewide Intensive Capacity Building Programs on Occupational Safety and Dignity of Sanitation Workers in Maharashtra

## Background

The Government of Maharashtra is demonstrating proactive leadership in enhancing sanitation practices and worker welfare through strategic partnerships. The Regional Centre for Urban and Environmental Studies (RCUES), All India Institute of Local Self Government, Mumbai functioning as a Swachhata Knowledge Partner (SKP) under Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0, has solidified its commitment by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Directorate of Swachh Maharashtra Mission (Urban), Urban Development Department. This partnership aims to bolster the mission by building capacities, fostering partnerships, and promoting innovative solutions. In alignment with their support to the Government of Maharashtra, RCUES of AIILSG Mumbai has launched the 'State-wide Intensive capacity building Program for Sanitation Workers (SWs) in Maharashtra on their Occupational Safety and Dignity' with support from UNICEF Maharashtra under the Maha-UWES-C. This training program has convergence with national flagship missions like SBM 2.0, AMRUT 2.0, National Urban Livelihood Mission (NULM), government schemes like NAMASTE and initiatives like Safai Mitra Suraksha Challenge, Garbage Free Cities (GFC) Certification, Open Defecation Free (ODF, ODF+, ODF++, Water+) under Swachh Survekshan, SBM 2.0 and will help cities in Maharashtra to dignify the sanitation workers and achieve the goals and targets of various government initiatives under the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0.

UNICEF partnered with Unilever-Domestos to support the government initiatives on sanitation particularly for creating a better environment for Sanitation Workers (SWs) with adequate knowledge and empowerment on their 'Occupational Safety and Dignity.' To achieve this, a nationwide training program has been initiated and the Key Resource Persons (KRP) from 16 States of India are trained by UNICEF to implement the capacity-building program for SWs. In Maharashtra, RCUES of AIILSG, Mumbai- the Secretariat of Maha-UWES-C is implementing this program for SWs.

## Problem Statement and Initiative

*"Unsafe sanitation work continues to persist in multiple forms in India in spite of it being banned in 1993<sup>1</sup> and several initiatives by CSOs. The state of sanitation workers remains a blind spot, as workers face significant challenges on multiple fronts – financial, health and social" (Advisors 2017)*

According to a report by the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK), manual scavenging remains prevalent in many states, with thousands of individuals still engaged in this degrading and unsafe practice. Despite the existence of laws prohibiting manual scavenging, enforcement has been lax, and there is a lack of accountability among authorities responsible for eradicating this practice. (Empowerment 2021-22)

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<sup>1</sup> The ban in 1993 refers to the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, which was passed by the Government of India in 1993. This legislation aimed to prohibit the employment of manual scavengers, who are individuals engaged in the manual cleaning of human excreta from dry latrines and sewers, and to provide for their rehabilitation.

## Key issues and challenges faced by Sanitation Workers

<b>01</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>07</b>
<b>Health Risks</b>	<b>Poor Working Conditions</b>	<b>Inadequate Training</b>	<b>Lack of Recognition</b>	<b>Low Wages</b>	<b>Social Protection</b>	<b>Social Stigma</b>
Exposure to waste materials can lead to various health issues, including respiratory problems, skin infections, and other illnesses.	SW often work in challenging environments with minimal facilities, inadequate infrastructure, and long hours, impacting their overall well-being	SW may not receive adequate training to safely handle the equipment and materials, contributing to accidents and injuries	Sanitation workers often lack recognition and appreciation for their essential role in maintaining public health and hygiene	Inadequate pay, coupled with contractual employment, results in financial struggles and job insecurity.	Lack adequate social protection measures, awareness about various social protection schemes etc.	Sanitation work is stigmatized, leading to discrimination and societal bias against workers and their families.

Addressing these issues requires comprehensive efforts, including improved safety measures, better training, fair wages, and increased awareness to ensure the well-being and dignity of sanitation workers.

The Jal Jeevan Mission, AMRUT, and Swachh Bharat Mission have collectively advanced water supply, sanitation, rural and urban development in India, yielding substantial infrastructure improvements. However, the sustainability of these achievements relies on trained sanitation workers. These workers play a vital role in operational maintenance, water quality assurance, waste management, sewerage maintenance, ensuring the efficiency and longevity of the infrastructure. Training programs prioritizing safety are essential to maximize the impact of these missions, safeguard the health of workers, and ensure the enduring benefits of improved water supply and sanitation systems across the nation.

Training sanitation workers on occupational safety and dignity aligns seamlessly with the Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 guidelines, which prioritize the well-being and dignity of workers. By imparting essential knowledge on safety measures and the proper handling of waste, the training contributes to the overall goal of creating a safe and respectful work environment for sanitation personnel.

UNICEF, in partnership with Unilever-Domestos, has undertaken a commendable initiative to support the government's sanitation efforts in India. This collaborative effort recognizes the pivotal role of trained sanitation workers in the sustainability of infrastructure developed under these flagship programs. As the nation strives for universal access to clean water through JJM, enhances urban sanitation through AMRUT, and continues its commitment to a cleaner India under SBM 2.0, the need for a skilled and empowered sanitation workforce becomes even more critical.

In Maharashtra, the RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai, the Secretariat of Maha-UWES-C, is spearheading the implementation of a comprehensive training program for SWs. This program not only imparts essential knowledge on occupational safety and dignity but also aligns with the broader vision of creating sustainable sanitation infrastructure across the country.



By prioritizing their well-being, the program contributes significantly to the creation of a conducive work environment that fosters both the efficient functioning of sanitation infrastructure and the dignity of those at the forefront of its maintenance.

### Aim and Objective of the training Program

Prioritizing occupational safety and dignity for sanitation workers in India is not only a matter of ethical responsibility but also contributes to public health, community well-being, and the achievement of broader sustainable development objectives. The training program targets capacity building, empowerment, and recognition. Beyond ethical concerns, prioritizing SWs' well-being significantly impacts public health, community welfare, and broader sustainable development goals.

### Methodology

The program's two-phase approach involved training Master Trainers (MTs) by Key Resource Persons (KRPs) of RCUES, Mumbai and UNICEF Mumbai field Office and cascading this training to SWs. The first phase focused on a rigorous 3-day training for MTs, drawing from diverse backgrounds to ensure comprehensive knowledge transfer. The second phase involved MTs disseminating tailored training to SWs across Maharashtra, adapting content to suit diverse community needs.

### Rationale

The program's foundation lies in its evidence-based strategy aligned with national frameworks, emphasizing capacity building, dignity, collaborative efforts, and inclusion. By leveraging partnerships and aligning with existing missions, it optimizes resources and expertise.

### Training Program Implementation: A Multi-Tiered Approach

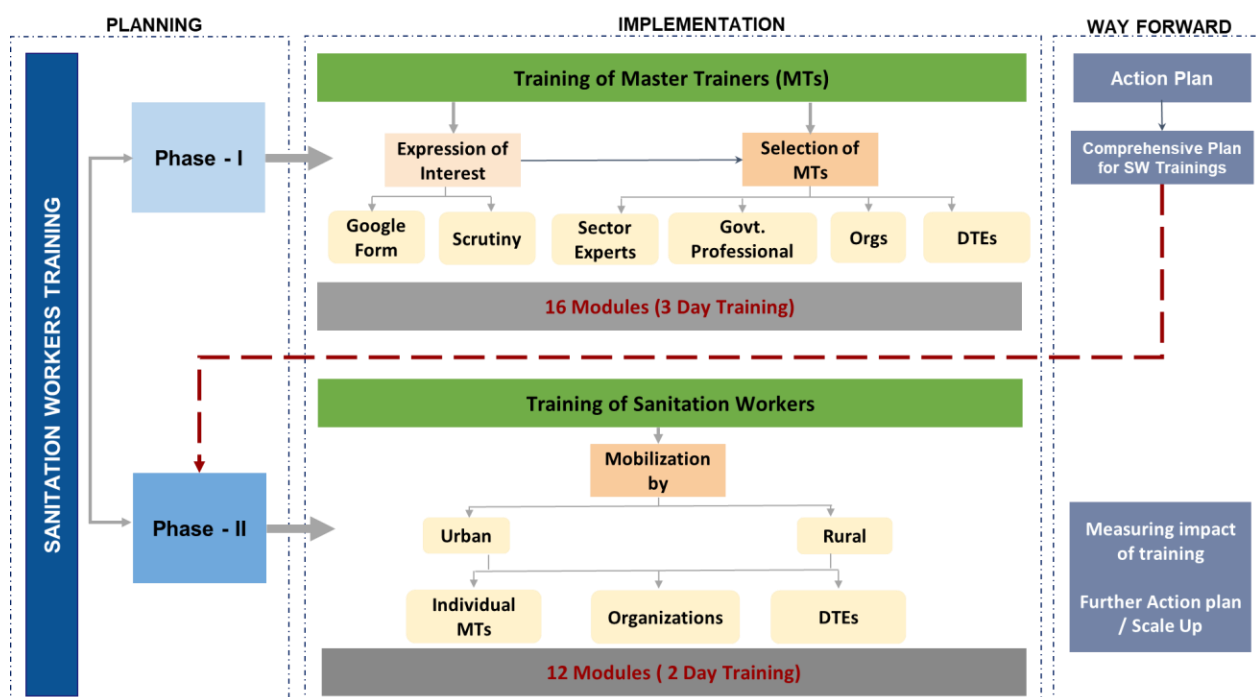


Figure 1 Multi - Tiered approach of training implementation

### Phase 1: Training Master Trainers

Selection from varied backgrounds ensured a holistic understanding among the 246 MTs. The intensive 3-day training by Key Resource Persons covered 16 interactive modules, fostering engagement and knowledge retention through practical tools and real-life scenarios.

### Phase 2: Training Sanitation Workers by Master Trainers

MTs cascaded training employing 12 customized modules, reaching 2164 SWs across 12 districts. The program's impact was significant, addressing a critical gap in occupational safety awareness and empowerment among SWs.

## Phase 1: Training to Master Trainers across Maharashtra



Figure 2 First batch of MTs Training

### Selection and Background:

To ensure comprehensive knowledge and contextual understanding, MTs were chosen from diverse backgrounds, including sanitation sector experts, Government officials, NGO and private sector representatives, Former/current city engineers, sanitary inspectors, and sanitation workers, urban and rural local body staff, relevant officials from Maharashtra government departments and authorities.

### Modules and Pedagogy:

MTs underwent a 3-day intensive training program delivered by the KRPs trained by RCUES Mumbai and UNICEF Maharashtra. The curriculum covered 16 interactive modules designed for high engagement and knowledge retention. These modules encompassed various aspects of occupational safety, rights, and responsibilities relevant to different categories of SWs. Total 16 modules covering various topics such as decoding condition of sanitation workers, cleaning of CT/PT, cleaning of drains, rights and entitlements, uses of PPE, legal provisions, vaccination, health and hygiene etc. have been designed to be highly interactive, demonstrative, and discussion-based, incorporating enriching case studies, videos, various activities, and games. The sessions are informative and engaging, allowing participants to actively participate and learn through various means such as role play, case studies etc.

## Glimpses from the MTs Capacity Building Program



Figure 3 Activity regarding understanding of schemes for SWs (left), games for MTs (Right)



Figure 4 Discussions with the MTs (Left), Site visit - understanding on field scenario of SWs (Right)



Figure 5 Demonstrations - in case of emergency (left), Activity - appropriate method of wearing PPE kit (Left)

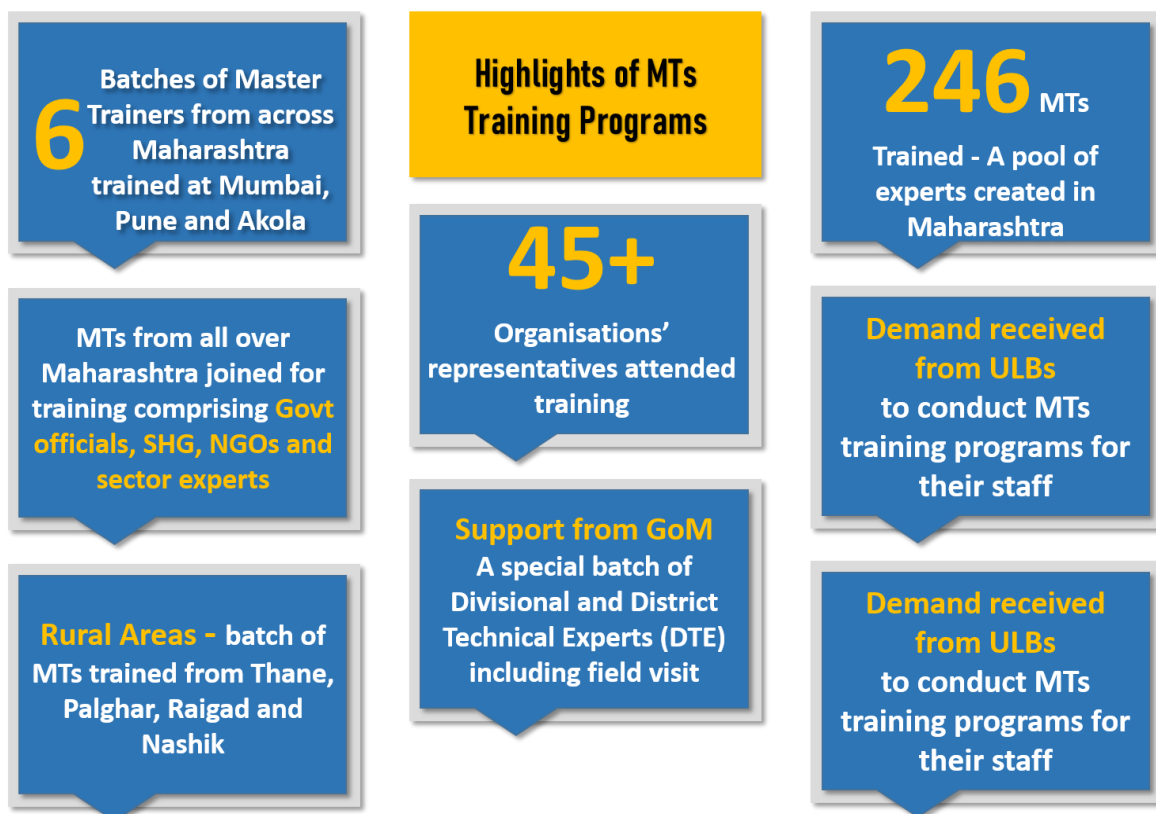


Figure 6 Highlights from the MTs training Program

### Pre – post training Assessment

The pre-training assessment provided valuable insights into the participants' existing expertise and identified areas for targeted intervention and skill development. Following the completion of the master trainers' training program, a comprehensive post-training assessment was undertaken to evaluate the mastery of key concepts and measure the impact of the training on participants' ability to promote occupational safety and dignity among sanitation workers.



Figure 7. Participants giving pre and post-test on Whatsapp Chabot

Facilitated through a WhatsApp chatbot featuring detailed questionnaires, developed by UNILEVER - Domestos, the assessment process streamlined data collection and analysis. Results were aggregated on an online dashboard, highlighting the program's impact: over three months, 246 master trainers

were trained, with a notable 31% female participation rate, while demonstrating significant improvement in participants' understanding following the training sessions (Refer fig.8).

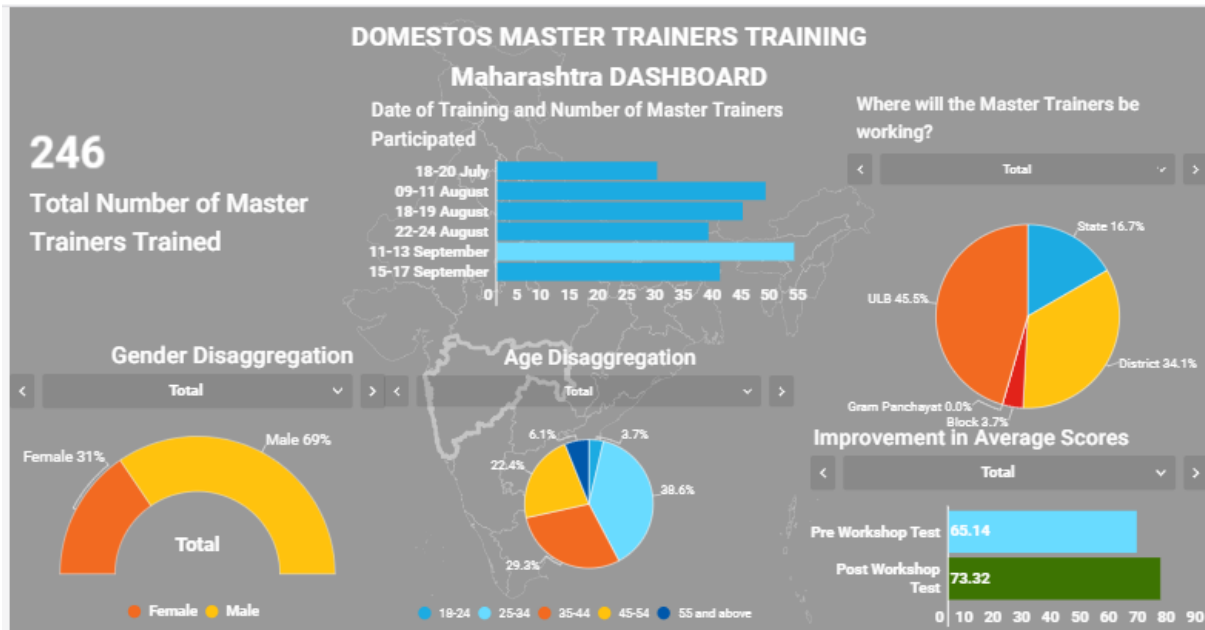




Figure 8 DASHBOARD: Pre - post training results

### Testimonials – From the Master Trainers



The choice of topics covered during the sessions was comprehensive and relevant. It was encouraging to see that all aspects of safety and dignity were included, such as occupational hazards, protective equipment usage, and social stigmas faced by sanitation workers. The sessions provided practical knowledge and insights with a field visit which will greatly benefit in the future initiatives. As a master trainer for the safety and dignity of sanitation workers, I have been fortunate enough to conduct several sessions aimed at creating a safer and more respectful work environment for these essential frontline workers. These sessions have not only allowed me to pass on valuable knowledge and skills but have also provided me with numerous eye-opening experiences and interactions.

- Dr. Mukesh Kulkarni, Assistant Manager, Recity, Mahableshwar



It was great to see professionals from diverse backgrounds of social work, civil society, sector experts etc. which formed a wonderful group for this purpose and led to increased knowledge sharing and interesting discussion. The KRPs were able to connect with the participants in a wonderful manner which led us to actively participate in the training.

- Dr. Pankaj Das, founder of an NGO Action for Social Reforms, Satara



Working closely with these dedicated individuals was an eye-opening experience. Immersed in the field of WASH, I gained profound insights into the realities faced by sanitation workers. It made me acutely aware of their challenges and highlighted the crucial need for better occupational health, safety, and dignity within their profession. Empathizing with these workers led me to envision their lives beyond their roles, contemplating the safety, dignity, and the families supporting them as frontline warriors of cleanliness. The training and capacity building initiatives for sanitation workers will undeniably play a pivotal role in fortifying their knowledge and enhancing the quality of their lives in their daily occupation.

- Ms. Radhika Boargaonkar, Project Manager, Ecosan Services Foundation, Pune



To date, we have not encountered a training program on this subject as comprehensively designed as this one. Every minute detail has been meticulously captured in this training, and we are committed to carrying it forward. Our organization will strive to extend this valuable training to reach the maximum number of sanitation workers.

- Mr. Prasanna, Project Executive, KAM Foundation, Pune

## Phase 2: Training and Sensitization of Sanitation Workers by the MTs



### Process of implementing SW trainings

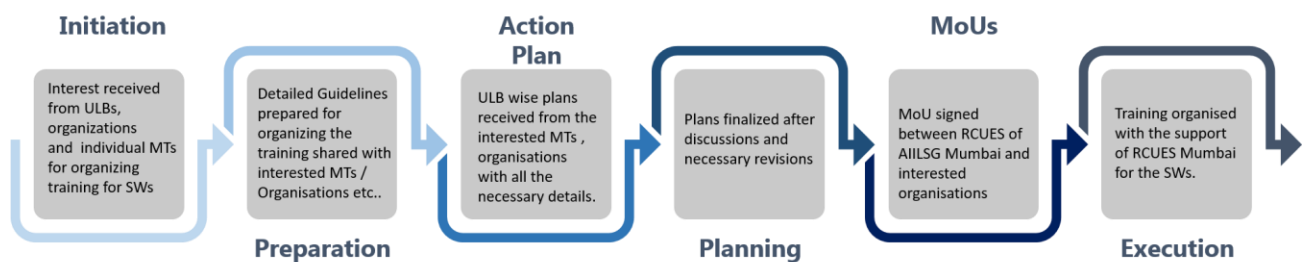


Figure 9 Process for implementing SW trainings

## Module Adaptation and Delivery:

MTs conducted a series of 2-day training programs for SWs from urban and rural local bodies throughout Maharashtra. The program utilized 12 customized modules adapted from the MT training for easier comprehension and relevance to SWs' specific needs and challenges.

### The key features of the training approach

#### 1 Interactive and Engaging



Employing Discussions



Games & Activities



Informative Videos

Fostered active participation , Knowledge sharing and Retention

#### 2 Personalization



Encouraging participants to share their experiences and align training content with their lived realities

#### 3 Practical Demonstrations



Including sessions on safely wearing PPE and other essential skills relevant to workplace safety

#### 4 Localized Content



Translating modules into Marathi for improved understanding and cultural sensitivity

**Reach and impact:** Over three months, 33 training programs were successfully conducted across 12 districts in Maharashtra, reaching 2164 SWs, including those from rural areas. This demonstrates the program's significant impact in terms of capacity building. Maharashtra was second highest to train Sanitation Workers State wide amongst 15 states. (Refer fig. 11).

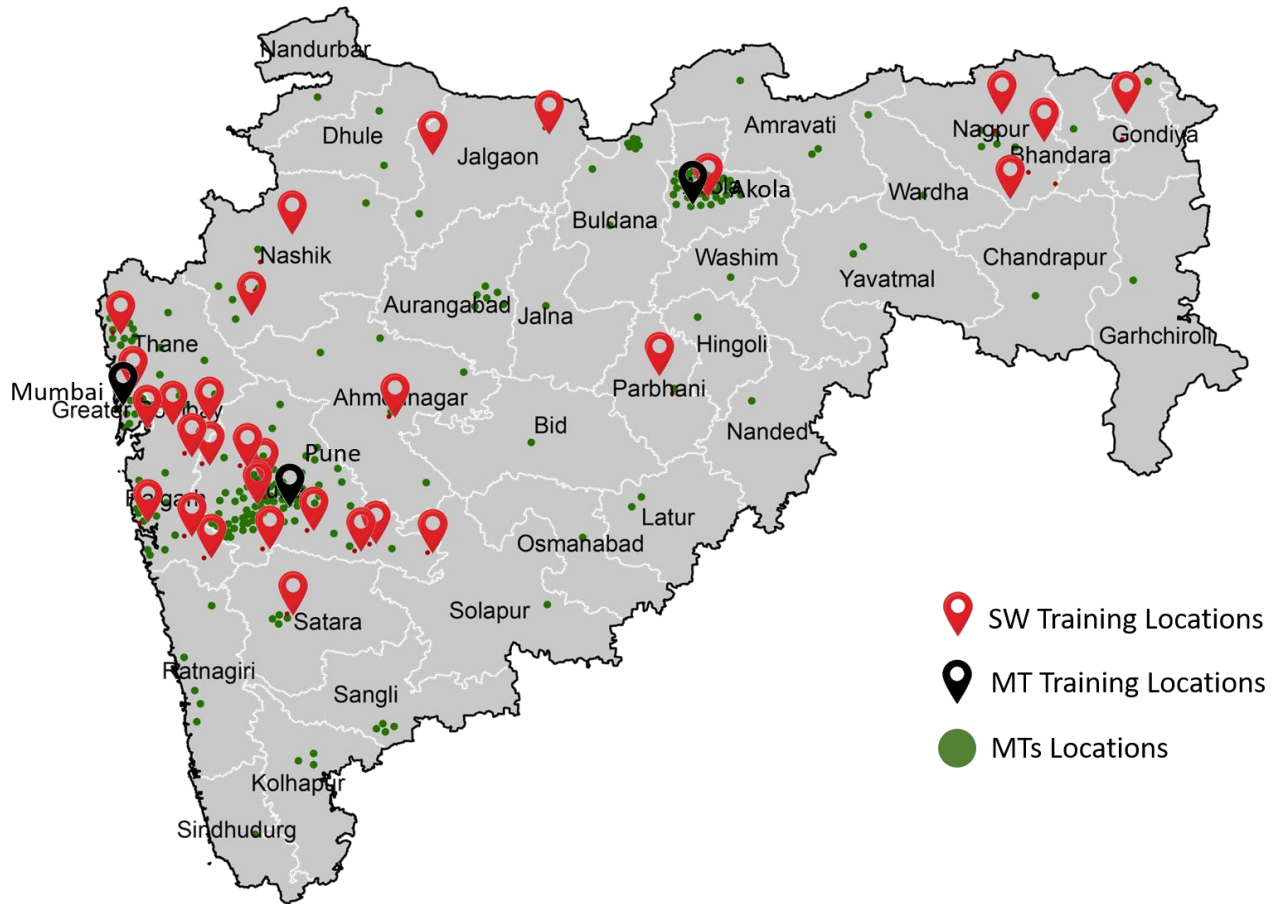


Figure 10 Location of Training conducted for MTs and SWs in Maharashtra



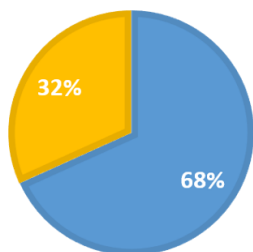
Figure 11 Number of Sanitation Workers trained State Wide



### Profile of Sanitation Workers –

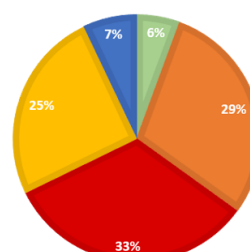
The participants were delegated by the ULBs for attending the program. It was observed that amongst the total 2164 participants 68% participants were male and the majority of the participants age group was 25-34 years and 35-44 years (Refer fig 12). It was also observed that majority of the participants delegated for the trainings were permanent staff.

COMPOSITION OF SW TRAINING PARTICIPANTS



■ Male ■ Female

AGE COMPOSITION OF THE SWS



■ 18-24 ■ 25-34 ■ 35-44 ■ 45-54 ■ 55 and Above

Figure 12 Composition of participants in SW trainings

Engaging with SWs in various training sessions revealed a notable gap in training programs that prioritized their safety and dignity. Unlike some professions that receive regular and comprehensive training, sanitation workers appeared to have been overlooked in this regard. The lack of emphasis on their well-being raised concerns about the effectiveness of existing training initiatives in addressing the unique challenges faced by these essential workers.



Figure 13 Hearing from the SWs - challenges, issues, expectations etc.

SWs shared various difficulties they faced on a daily basis, ranging from occupational hazards to social stigma. These challenges included exposure to harmful substances, inadequate safety equipment, and insufficient healthcare support. The training sessions provided a platform for sanitation workers to voice these concerns, fostering a sense of community and mutual understanding among the workers. One of the critical issues that surfaced during discussions with sanitation workers was their limited awareness of government schemes, rights, and entitlements available to them. Many were unaware of the support mechanisms in place that could address their specific needs and challenges. This lack of information not only hindered their ability to access essential resources but also contributed to a sense of vulnerability in their profession.



Figure 14 Demonstration for wearing PPE appropriately

One aspect of the training that proved particularly impactful was the inclusion of informative and demonstrative lessons. For example, sessions on correctly wearing Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) emerged as highly effective in enhancing the understanding of safety protocols among sanitation workers. These practical demonstrations not only improved their knowledge but also equipped them with tangible skills to ensure their own safety in the demanding and often hazardous environments they operate in.

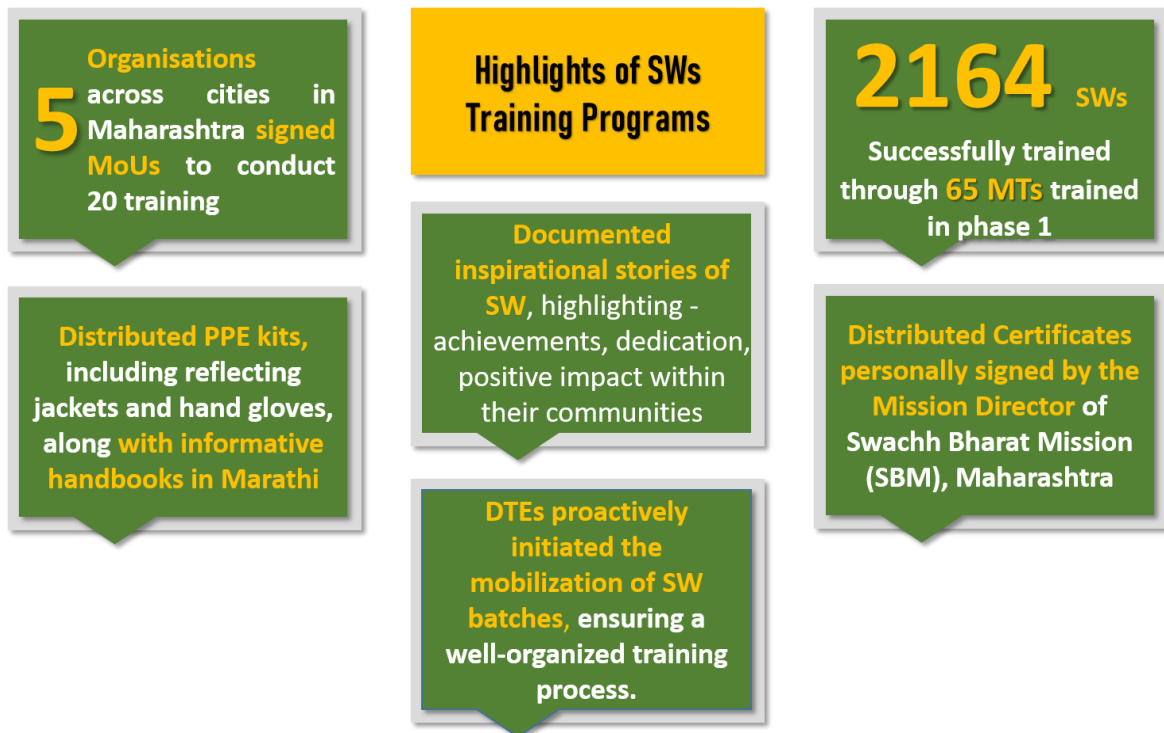


Figure 15 Highlights of SW training programs

The session prompted sanitation workers to discuss their firsthand experiences in the field, facilitating personal explanations that aligned with their practical knowledge and encounters. This personalised method guaranteed the effective conveyance of information, connecting with their real-life experiences.

During the discussions, numerous compelling narratives emerged showcasing the diverse experiences of sanitation workers. These stories highlighted their remarkable endeavors, ranging from

entrepreneurial pursuits to ongoing educational aspirations. These anecdotes have been meticulously compiled into a separate document, serving as a reservoir of inspiration for others.

### Glimpses from the SW training programs



Figure 16 Four batches of SW training conducted in Rural areas



Figure 17 Certificate, Reflecting jackets, gloves distributed to the SWs



Figure 18 Inclusion of games, activities to convey important messages (left), celebration of hand washing day wherein importance of hand washing and process was conveyed

## Testimonials – From the ULB Officials



**MS, Kavita Dwivedi, IAS,**  
Municipal Commissioner,  
Akola Municipal Corporation

"I am proud to highlight the profound impact of the recent training initiative conducted for our sanitary inspector & graduate sanitary workers as master trainers for ensuring safety and dignity of sanitation workers conducted by RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai and UNICEF, Maharashtra. In the three day training, led by esteemed resource persons, these sessions equipped our master trainers with invaluable knowledge and practical skills essential for ensuring the safety and dignity of our sanitation workforce. Witnessing the dedication and expertise of these trainers has been truly inspiring, and we are committed to leveraging their new-found capabilities to enhance workplace standards and promote a culture of respect and professionalism within our Municipal Corporation. The success of this training program has reinforced our determination to extend similar opportunities to all our workers, recognizing the transformative potential of such initiatives. We extend our sincere gratitude to RCUES and UNICEF for their partnership in driving positive change within our sanitation sector. Going forward, we remain steadfast in our commitment to creating safer, healthier, and more dignified environments for all.



**Dr. Ketaki Ghatge**  
Assistant medical officer of Health, SWM Department, PMC

"As a representative of the Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC), I cannot overstate the transformative impact of the training conducted for master trainers selected from PMC in ensuring the safety and dignity of sanitation workers. Witnessing firsthand the dedication and expertise of these master trainers, equipped with comprehensive knowledge and practical skills imparted by key resource persons, has been truly inspiring. Their ability to effectively impart training to sanitation workers, fostering a culture of respect and professionalism, has significantly elevated workplace standards within our municipality. The ripple effects of this initiative are profound, leading to safer working environments, improved hygiene practices, and enhanced community well-being. This type of comprehensive training is unprecedented in our experience, and its success has underscored the urgent need to extend such programs to all our workers. The training provided to master trainers and sanitation workers of PMC was exceptionally well-received, with participants praising the quality and relevance of the content delivered. The initiative taken by RCUES of AILSG, Mumbai with UNICEF, Maharashtra has been instrumental in driving positive change within the sanitation sector, and we look forward to furthering our partnership to create lasting impact."

## Testimonials – From the Sanitation Workers



In this workshop we got useful information about our work, work related videos were shown so we got information about how to interact with people while working. The cleaning staff got information about how their financial situation will improve and what should be done for it.

Ajendra Ambadas Hanskar , SW, Faizpur Municipal Council



This training 1<sup>st</sup> of its kind which was conducted for us, where I learnt about the health hazards which happen to us in our daily work life. The safety measures, precautions explained, demonstrated to us has been very useful. I am single person responsible for 8 members in my family and this training has opened my eye towards so many things I need to take care of for my and my family's well being.

Smt. Shevnta Dhanaraj Pawar, SW, Jejuri Municipal Council



Thankyou for giving us the stage to express, we were not aware of so many things covered in this two day training program ranging from doing our work in the correct manner, using the PPE kit appropriately, using of equipment's correctly, laws and legal provisions and many useful schemes. This training has been very helpful for us. Thankyou to the organisers for mobilizing this training for us.

- Pankaj Digambar Shide, SW, Satara Municipal Council



In the training we understood the importance of prioritizing our safety which was very well explained to us through videos and demonstrations. We are now aware how to use the PPE Kit correctly and we promise to follow these instructions in our regular work everyday. We recieved information about how to interact with people while working also. We would like to participate in such trainings further.

- Meghraj Bhoir, SW, Sakoli Nagar Parishad

*Please note: All testimonials above have been translated from Marathi to English*

## Key observations and findings:

1. Lack of and limited comprehensive prior training for SWs highlighted the program's relevance.
2. Empowerment stemmed from knowledge and dialogue, giving SWs a voice.
3. The activities served as a reflective tool, shedding light on the gaps in the SWs' understanding. These were crucial aspects such as the correct procedures for wearing and removing PPE, as well as identifying the most suitable equipment for their daily tasks. The experiential nature of the activities pinpointed these areas of misunderstanding and helped in ensuring that the sanitation workers were well-informed and proficient in their roles.
4. SWs lacked awareness regarding their entitlements and the benefits offered to them through government schemes. They expressed a keen interest in gaining a comprehensive understanding of the rights and benefits available to them.
5. Lack of awareness about entrepreneurship opportunities and essential skills.
6. The participants demonstrated a strong commitment to integrating the acquired knowledge from the training program into real-world applications.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

The statewide intensive capacity building program in Maharashtra has made a remarkable impact in addressing the occupational safety and dignity of sanitation workers. The commitment to equipping these essential workers with the knowledge for their well-being and professional growth has been evident throughout the training sessions. In conclusion, the program has successfully laid the foundation for a safer and more dignified work environment for sanitation workers across the state. The emphasis on occupational safety measures, coupled with a focus on preserving the dignity of these workers, reflects a holistic approach that goes beyond mere technical training.

Based on the training conducted in 33 cities and 11 number of districts under ZPs covering so many villages across Maharashtra, encompassing over 2164 sanitation workers, and considering the feedback from both authorities and participants, it is clear that there is a pressing demand for similar training programs throughout the entire state. The pilot programs have successfully laid the foundation, utilizing a distinctive approach that involved creating a cadre of 246 Master Trainers across Maharashtra, each already equipped with the requisite information and skills. This existing foundation now requires further harnessing and expansion. Leveraging the pool of Master Trainers established in Phase I, ULBs and ZPs can capitalize on the opportunity to conduct regular training sessions for all sanitation workers. The SBM(G), Annual Implementation Plans (AIP) outline specific activities and strategies for improving sanitation infrastructure, promoting hygiene practices, and enhancing the well-being of rural communities. By incorporating capacity building programs for sanitation workers into these plans, authorities can address a crucial aspect of sanitation infrastructure maintenance and ensure the sustainability of SBM initiatives. Additionally, considering periodic refresher courses to reinforce key concepts and address emerging challenges and developments in the sector.

### Key Action Points for Way Forward:

1. **Scale up** – There is a demonstrated need for expanding similar training programs throughout the entire state of Maharashtra. Leveraging the cadre of Master Trainers established in Phase I, efforts should be made to conduct regular training sessions for all sanitation workers across different regions of the state.
2. **Periodic refresher course** – To reinforce key concepts and address emerging challenges and developments in the sector, periodic refresher courses should be considered. These courses

can help ensure that sanitation workers stay updated on best practices and continue to enhance their skills and knowledge over time.

3. **Action points for Local Governing Bodies** - A comprehensive set of guidelines has been crafted, drawing from the insights during the workshop. These guidelines are meticulously aligned with each module covered in the training, serving as a practical guidebook for implementing actions that safeguard the occupational safety and uphold the dignity of sanitation workers. These can be implemented at the local level.
4. **Convergence of Departments:** Various Government departments (UDD, WSSD, DoECC etc.) and organizations are currently undertaking and planning initiatives to conduct comprehensive sanitation worker trainings, encompassing diverse aspects. The convergence of these initiatives will aim to unite all departments towards a common goal, ensuring targeted efforts towards SWs.
5. **Comprehensive trainings** - Efforts should also be made to disseminate more information about existing government schemes and entitlements to ensure that sanitation workers can access the support they are entitled to through focused trainings on the subject, working closely on this with the ULBs and relevant departments, proposing convergence with various ongoing missions, programs and schemes (e.g. NAMASTE).
6. **Assessing Impact** - Implement mechanisms to assess the effectiveness and impact of the training programs. Regular feedback from participants and stakeholders can inform adjustments and improvements to future training initiatives.

By addressing these gaps in training and awareness, it is possible to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for sanitation workers. Recognizing the importance of their contributions to public health and the overall well-being of communities, it becomes imperative to implement measures that safeguard their safety, uphold their dignity, and empower them with the knowledge and resources they need to thrive in their crucial roles.

## Annexures

1. QR code for modules – scan the QR code to refer the modules for Masters Trainers Training and Sanitation Workers Training



2. Template of certificate distributed to SWs in the training programs





### 3. Training Details

Statewide intensive training program on their occupational safety and dignity of sanitation workers in Maharashtra					
SN	City	District	Type	Date	No. of SWs Trained
1	Akola	Akola	Urban	21-22 August	57
2	Nashik	Nashik	Urban	25-26 October	60
3	Dindori	Nashik	Urban	26-27 October	37
4	Nashik	Nashik	Rural	23 - 24 November	83
5	Ahmednagar	Ahmednagar	Urban	6 -7 November	52
6	Thane	Thane	Urban	12-13 October	121
7	Mira Bhayander	Thane	Urban	3- 4 November	132
8	Badlapur	Thane	Urban	28-29 November	53
9	Raigad	Raigad	Rural	21-22 November	46
10	Mahad	Raigad	Urban	28-29 November	44
11	Mangaon	Raigad	Urban	28-29 November	60
12	Murud	Raigad	Urban	30-1 December	58
13	Navi Mumbai	Thane	Urban	29-30 November	65
14	Nagpur	Nagpur	Urban	23 - 24 November	142
15	Parbhani	Parbhani	Urban	12-13 October	90
16	Palghar	Palghar	Rural	29-30 November	49
17	Satara	Satara	Urban	30-31 October	51
18	Satara	Satara	Urban	27-28 November	60
19	Falzipur	Jalgaon	Urban	25-26 November	52
20	Amalner	Jalgaon	Urban	29-30 December	51
21	Pune	Pune	Urban	12-13 October	56
22	Pune	Pune	Urban	12-13 October	68
23	Indapur	Pune	Urban	30-31 October	85
24	Baramati	Pune	Urban	30-31 October	93
25	PCMC	Pune	Urban	1-2 November	42
26	Talegaon Dahbahde	Pune	Urban	20-21 November	58
27	Malegaon Budruk	Pune	Rural	22-23 November	69
28	Lonavala	Pune	Urban	22-23 November	66
29	Jejuri	Pune	Urban	28-29 November	51
30	Bhor	Pune	Urban	1-2 December	53
31	Umred	Nagpur	Urban	21-22 December	49
32	Bhivapur	Nagpur	Urban	20-21 December	26
33	Sakoli	Nagpur	Urban	23-24 December	85
				Total	<b>2164</b>

## Glossary

1. **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM)**: A nationwide campaign in India aimed at promoting cleanliness, hygiene, and sanitation.
2. **Master Trainers (MTs)**: Individuals who undergo intensive training to become trainers themselves, responsible for cascading training to others.
3. **Key Resource Persons (KRPs)**: Experts who provide essential knowledge and guidance during training programs.
4. **Occupational Safety**: Measures and protocols aimed at ensuring the safety and well-being of workers in their workplace.
5. **Dignity**: Respect and recognition of the inherent worth and rights of individuals.
6. **MoU (Memorandum of Understanding)**: A formal agreement between two or more parties outlining mutual goals and responsibilities.
7. **AMRUT (Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation)**: A government initiative in India aimed at improving infrastructure in urban areas.
8. **NULM (National Urban Livelihood Mission)**: A government scheme focused on reducing poverty and unemployment in urban areas.
9. **NGO (Non-Governmental Organization)**: A non-profit organization that operates independently of government.
10. **PPE (Personal Protective Equipment)**: Equipment designed to protect workers from hazards in the workplace.
11. **ULB (Urban Local Body)**: A local governing body responsible for municipal administration in urban areas.
12. **Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**: A government initiative aimed at providing piped water supply to every household in India.
13. **GFC (Garbage Free Cities)**: A certification program aimed at promoting cleanliness and waste management in cities.
14. **ODF (Open Defecation Free)**: A status indicating that an area is free from open defecation, achieved through sanitation initiatives.
15. **ZPs (Zilla Parishads)**: Local government bodies at the district level in India.
16. **SWs (Sanitation Workers)**: Individuals employed in tasks related to cleaning and maintaining sanitation facilities.
17. **NAMASTE (National Action for Mechanized Sanitation)**: The scheme is being undertaken jointly by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment (MoSJE) and aims to eradicate unsafe sewer and septic tank cleaning practices.
18. **SafaiMitra Suraksha Challenge (SSC)**: The Government launched this “challenge” for all states to make sewer-cleaning mechanized by April 2021.

