

COVA- ICAN
Summer Activism Project
By School Students
April – May 2019

Topics:

- 1. Water Entitlements - Water Wastage - Responsibilities of Public & Officials**
- 2. Lavish Weddings**

COVA organised an Intensive Summer Activism Program on understanding social issues and learning techniques for effective advocacy for the students who won prizes at the 14th Project Works Display in December 2018. In all 25 prize-winning students were selected for participating in this Special Summer Training Program from 14th April to 15th May 2019. The group of Students were from TMRIES [Telangana Minorities Residential School], MS Future School, Gyan Educational Academy, Zehra Free High School, and St. Stephen High School. The students were divided into 2 teams and they worked on Water Conservation and Lavish Weddings, and as part of the field visit, students took a survey in Kishanbagh, Doodhbowli, and Malakpet. After the survey, they found that people are facing different problems.



SAP Participants at their Field Work Taking House Hold Surveys



SAP Participants at their Field Work to Check if the Water is Getting Wasted while Filling Water Tanks

15 days of the program were devoted to understanding issues and field visits and 15 days to undertake advocacy with elected representatives and officials including Ministers, MPs, MLAs. Corporators, Bureaucrats, Media, Community Leaders, Religious Leaders and Thought Leaders to understand and address the problems under Study.

Many experts like Mr. Amin Jaffari (MLC), Mr. Krishna, Director Operations, HMWS&SB, Brother Thomas, Sardar Nanak Singh Nishter, and Mr. Aleem Khan Falaki and Mr. Vedalankar from Arya

Prathinidhi Sabha Mr. Omer Abideen and others gave lectures on different topics and made students understand about the said topics in a systematic way.

Below are the Findings of Students after the Field Visits and Recommendations Given by to Officials and Religious Leaders

S.No	Problems And Issues	Action Requested
1.	<i>Convenient water supply timings. Some people are getting water supply from 2:00 pm To 4:00 pm which is not suitable for them as they are busy at work.</i>	<i>People are requesting to change the timings from 6:00 am to 9: 00 am and 6 pm to 10 pm</i>
2.	<i>Public taps to provide free drinking water for the people near Markets, Bus Stands and other public areas.</i>	<i>Poor people can't afford to buy drinking water bottles from the shops. This will also reduce the use of plastic bottles and save environment. Individuals and Corporates should sponsor such public water taps and Water Board should give running water of drinking quality.</i>
3.	<i>Working water meters for all domestic consumers. We use electricity meters to see how much It Costs and we use It less. If we have water meter also we will save it as we get the bill.</i>	<i>In many areas, people are not having water meters at home. So they are wasting water so we request the government to provide water meters in all homes to save water.</i>
4.	<i>Water is overflowing on roads because of faulty pipelines and it is making a lot of water wastage.</i>	<i>Line Man should check on the roads regularly for water overflow and immediately get it repaired. Citizens' awareness programs should also be organized to give complaints regarding faulty pipelines and water overflow.</i>
5.	<i>Water Tanker Lids, Taps are Damaged. Water is wasted when they are filling in tankers because of overflow.</i>	<i>Motor should be switched off when the tank is filled. Water Tanker Valve, tank body and lids Of Water Tankers should be maintained properly Water tankers should also be made leak proof like milk tankers and petrol tankers.</i>
6.	<i>Car servicing centers should be made to use less water.</i>	<i>Car servicing centers should have compulsory Water Harvesting Pits to recycle water.</i>
7.	<i>Inadequate water supply and supply of polluted water.</i>	<i>Timings of Water Supply should be strictly followed by HMWS&SB. All areas should get water supply time equally. Awareness program to let people know about how to complain if they get polluted water.</i>

2. Lavish Weddings:

The Group on Lavish Weddings met and interviewed people in different localities from different socio- economic backgrounds. They conducted individual interviews and group discussions with people who had weddings in their families recently and also met owners of Function Halls, officials of Municipal Corporation, Corporators, MLAs, MPs, Minister and religious leaders.

Major Findings of the Group:

1. Majority of the respondents accepted that they had to give dowry.
2. Some respondents also accepted that they sold their property to meet the expenses of the marriage.
3. Many said they do not have much savings and have to take loans at interest or borrow money that they find very difficult to repay back
4. Buying new clothes for every wedding and not using it again. Public awareness program should be organized.

5. Many respondents said that food gets wasted. The menu should be simple and should have a few items.
6. On average respondents said that they invite 600-800 people for the marriages. Only close relatives and friends should be invited to marriages.
7. Shaadi Mubarak Scheme is good but there is a delay of 3 to 6 months in release of funds by the Government and also some corruption. It should be released within one month and without corruption.

Recommendations:

1. Mass Public Awareness should be raised against taking or giving dowry.
2. Wedding should not be organized in big function hall that are very expensive and cost in lakhs but in community centers of the Municipal Corporation.
3. Limited number of guests should be invited.
4. Simple food should be served and there should be no wastage.
5. Shadi Mubarak support should be released within a month of the wedding.

Actions Required by Key Actors:

1. Religious leaders should speak about this regularly in their weekly sermons against dowry and extravagant marriages. Community members and Thought Leaders must also speak about it wherever possible.
2. Municipal Corporation to arrange to provide land in parks and playgrounds and MPs should give funds from MPLADS and corporates and businesses should also sponsor construction of such community halls.
3. Government should release Shadi Mubarak Support within a month and ensure no corruption is involved.

Advocacy and Representations

After the survey findings, the students prepared the representations for various officials, politicians, and ministers. The students met Mr. Mohmood Ali, Hon. Ministers for Home Affairs, Mr. K. Keshava Rao, Hon Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha, Mr. Amin Ul Hasan Jafri, MLC, Ms. Ayesha Rubina, GHMC Corporator, Mr. Dana Kishore, Commissioner GHMC and MD Water Works and few more officials and submitted the representations to them.

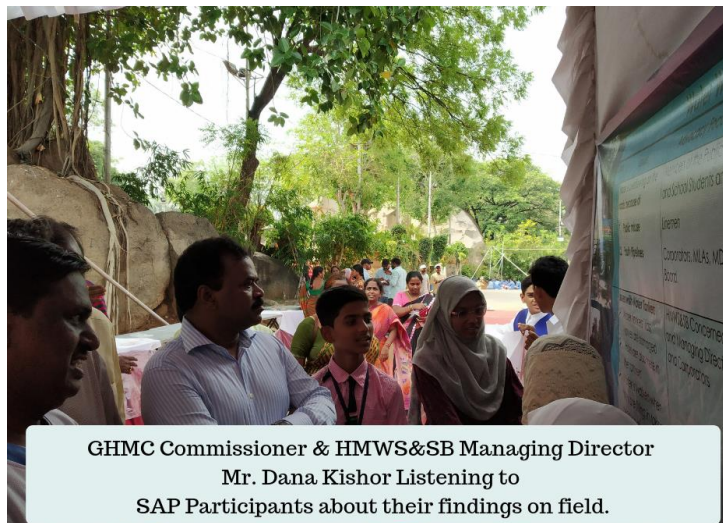
The Minister, MLAs and the Corporator appreciated the efforts, findings and recommendations of the students and offered to write to the concerned officials. Dr. K. Keshava Rao MP said that the Summer Activism Program was a good initiative and he lauded the students for their interest. Mr. Dana Kishore, Commissioner GHMC who is also the MD of Water Works, appreciated the recommendations made by the students and directed the official to study them for necessary action.



SAP Participants Submitting Representation to Mr. Mahmood Ali, Minister of Home Affairs, Telangana



SAP PARTICIPANTS SUBMITTING REPRESENTATION TO MR. K. KESHA VA RAO, MP, RAJYA SABHA



GHMC Commissioner & HMWS&SB Managing Director Mr. Dana Kishor Listening to SAP Participants about their findings on field.