

### **Announcing Resource Centre for Communications Material**

The National Institute of Urban Affairs ([NIUA](#)) in partnership with the Water and Sanitation Program ([WSP](#)) and in agreement with the Ministry of Urban Development has initiated the creation of a knowledge management resource centre in the area of strategic communications. The communications resource centre is in the pilot phase with the portal proposed to be hosted on the NIUA website under its Peer Experience and Reflective Learning ([PEARL](#)) initiative. The proposed resource centre will be a warehouse of communications strategies and materials developed by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)/ water utilities and other associated organizations.

There is general acceptance within the water supply and sanitation sector that any meaningful program needs strong community participation and collaboration for its effective implementation and sustenance. Further it has been observed that the support of the communities and beneficiaries can be garnered through regular communication, with tailored outreach programs being designed and implemented in the local context, addressing all evolving issues and queries of any given community in a holistic manner.

Involving beneficiaries at each stage requires providing information, training and education to facilitate communication. The experiences garnered in India have brought out some major challenges in this regard:

- Lack of adequate audio, visual and written educational and communication material
- Need for information on the availability and use of such materials
- Poor access of these materials at all levels, from decision makers to the grassroots level
- Lack of connection and networking among organizations involved in using and producing communication materials on a pan-India basis, including private and public sector development communication agencies

In India, much like as it is globally, many local, bilateral and multilateral agencies are working in the area of water and sanitation. Organizations develop independent communication strategies and materials that are useful. The absence of a centralized knowledge center that collects, catalogues and disseminates these resources is being felt.

To overcome these gaps, WSP and NIUA have collaborated and initiated the creation of this communication materials resource center. As a next step, we are looking to identify Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), water utilities and to gather educational and communication materials developed (any Indian language or in English). This information will be cataloged and hosted on the PEARL website for easy access to others working in the WSS sector.

ULBs and water utilities that have a proven track record in initiating community participation in their municipalities are invited to share the communication material developed by them and participate in this pilot program.

The key areas under consideration would be: Urban Water, Urban Sanitation, Waste Water Management, Solid Waste Management and Rainwater Harvesting.

For further information or expressing your interest in participation please get in touch with Ms Kiran Negi at [kiran.negi@gmail.com](mailto:kiran.negi@gmail.com) or Ms Nilanjana Dasgupta Sur at [nsur@niua.org](mailto:nsur@niua.org)