
A Brief Report on

Research Reaching Villages

Supported by
WASHCost (India)

Implemented by
WASSAN

Duration:
Jan 1st 2011 to July 10th 2011

Reported on
September 2011



Content

<i>Context</i>	2
<i>Objectives</i>	2
<i>Strategy</i>	3
<i>Resource Persons (RPs) Identification</i>	3
<i>Training Resource Persons (RPs)</i>	4
<i>Pamphlets/ Brochures</i>	4
<i>Village Narratives</i>	4
<i>Formation of Teams</i>	5
<i>Plan for Field Work</i>	5
Execution of Field Work.....	6
<i>Focused Group Discussions on Personal Hygiene</i>	6
<i>Triggering Exercise</i>	6
<i>Hand Wash Demonstration</i>	8
<i>Rallies</i>	8
<i>Cleaning Surroundings of Water Points (Shramadaan – Voluntary labour)</i>	8
<i>Sharing Research Findings and Observations in Gram Sabha</i>	9
<i>Dispatching Post Cards</i>	9
Support/ Supervision Mechanisms	10
Visits for Providing Onsite Support as well as Monitoring.....	10
Review of Progress	10
Learning's and Observations.....	10
Sustaining Efforts for Behavioural Change	11
Annexure 1: List of Resource Persons	12
Annexure 2: List of Habitations	13
Photo-gallery.....	14

Context

The experience of test bed sites of WASHCost project reveals that the communities and representatives of local institutions, started thinking on the gaps in the current WASH services. They are also acting on improving WASH service delivery system by taking small initiatives such as forming water and sanitation committee, collecting water user charges, closing pit taps, removal of electrical motors connected to piped water supply, installation of control valves etc. This happened because of the visioning exercise and continued follow-up. During research phase, the WASHCost (India) Project studied WASH service delivery system in 107 habitations of 23 districts in Andhra Pradesh. The WASHCost (India) Team strongly felt that sharing the research findings and observations with these habitations might trigger some changes in WASH service delivery system. The fund available for facilitation costs (fee for local communities for extending support during study) to the local institutions/ bodies was used for triggering/ demonstrating a process through which communities and local institutions could take more active role in WASH governance.

Considering test bed sites experience and opinion of WASHCost Team Members, the Research Reaching Villages exercise was initiated. Under the research component of the WASHCost project the WASH infrastructure facilities, their life cycles and costs, access and utilization of services, quality and source sustainability, governance issues, community participation are being studied. While the entire data sets were not ready at the time of undertaking the Research Reaching Villages the idea was to share the information in the form of village narratives and empower the community in involving in informed discussions and decision making process related to WASH issues. While the RWSS department is mostly concerned with the incurrence of expenditure on providing infrastructural facilities, the central government norms of self assessment and monitoring are not put into practice. The Research Reaching Villages is an attempt at making this change at the grassroot level. The methodology adopted is a combination of widely practices Community Led Total Sanitation and Participatory Rural Appraisal techniques. As the provision and utilization of sanitation facilities had the lowest priority at all levels Research Reaching Villages focused on this and hygiene issues, while sharing the key findings of research with the villagers.

Communities need facilitation support and guidance to engage themselves in self monitoring and assessment of WASH services. This means effective partnerships between community based organizations/ local self governance institutions (Gram Panchayat); capable civil society organizations and concerned departments. This agenda also requires adequate financial provisions and capacity building support systems. Research Reaching Villages is a small step towards such an initiative.

WASSAN, as one of the partners of WASHCost (India) Project, came forward for facilitating the exercise in sample habitations with the following objectives for further strengthening and ensuring smooth process of embedding good practices in WASH sector:

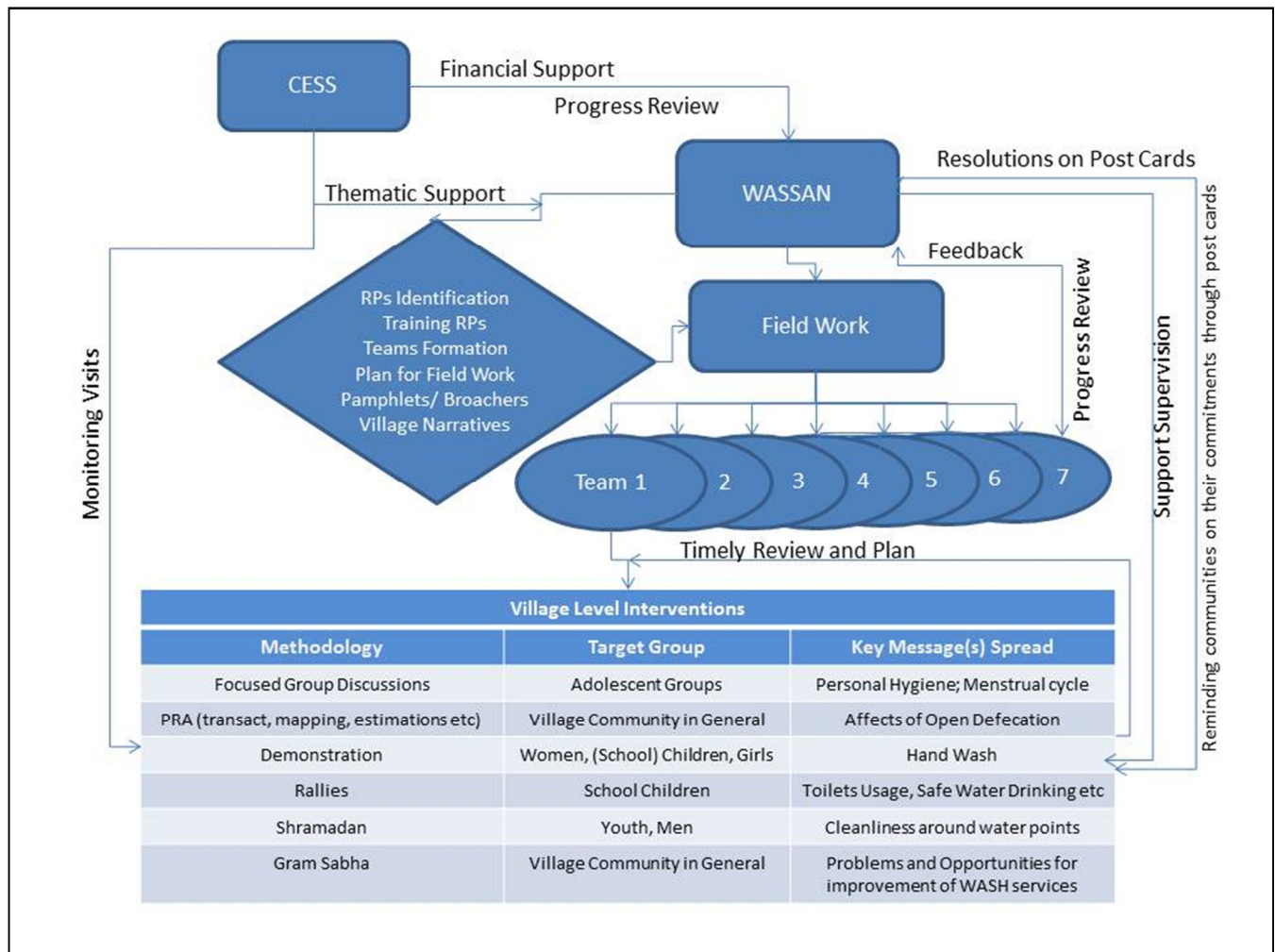
Objectives

The overall aim is sharing research findings and observations with the villages. The specific objectives of the programme are as follows:

- Enlightening communities on opportunities for improving WASH service delivery.
- Educating communities on bad affects of open defecation and use of toilets.
- Stressing on importance of washing hands before eating food and after defecation.
- Need for keeping surroundings of water points' clean.
- Educating school children and adolescent girls on personal hygiene etc.

Strategy

The following strategy was developed and used for achieving the objectives of the Research Reaching Villages:



Resource Persons (RPs) Identification

While identifying resource persons for initiating series of activities for spreading key messages, care has been taken for inclusion of the persons familiar with the theme and the habitations. Eleven candidates who worked as investigators in WASHCost Project earlier were deployed as resource persons (through interview process conducted on 21st February 2011). In addition, 10 persons working as consultants with Rural Water Supply and Sanitation department were also deployed for this purpose; as they are also trained on quick mobilization of communities for delivering key messages in the habitations. The

combination of data enumerators (investigators) and community mobilizers (department consultants) resulted in an ideal team for spreading the key findings and observations of research.

Training Resource Persons (RPs)

The 21 resource persons were trained for six days from 23rd March 2011 to 28th March 2011 in WASSAN training centre at Parigi. This training programme reinforced the skills and knowledge base of participants particularly on (a) organizing gram sabha for sharing research findings and observations on WASH service delivery system; (b) communicating bad affects of open defecation using participatory rural appraisal methods such as transect walk, mapping exercises, faecal matter calculation, faecal matter contaminating water and food, loss of person-days and money due to water and food borne diseases etc; (c) facilitating focused group discussions with adolescent girls, women and children on personal hygiene and hand wash; and (d) cleaning the premises of water points by involving youth and peoples' representatives. The field visits and mock exercises conducted as part of training programme gave first-hand experience on dissemination of key messages of findings and observations of research. Dr. Snehalatha not only explained the WASHCost (India) Project but also provided tips for effective delivery of key messages. Ms. Sirisha explained the facilitation techniques. Mr. Venkataramana Rao (external resource person) illuminated the process of conducting triggering exercise on affects of open defecation. Mr. Subramanyam Naidu and Ms. Nalini anchored the rest of the sessions on tools for effective communication, local governance and WASH services, organizing gram sabha on WASH etc.



Pamphlets/ Brochures

The preliminary findings of WASHCost (India) Project revealed that the serious problems that require immediate attention are: (1) only 20 to 30 percent of population is using the toilets, and (2) the Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC) which have to supervise WASH service delivery system are formed notionally and members of committee are not aware that they are members in VWSC. Considering this, a pamphlet and a brochures were developed (in Telugu) on importance of using toilets and the roles and responsibilities of Village Water and Sanitation Committee. Copies (5000) of the pamphlet and brochure were kept ready for distribution during the field work.

Village Narratives

The data collected from primary and secondary sources was compiled as village narrative reports. These narratives give general picture of WASH Service delivery system in the

village including population, livestock, water sources/ points, pattern of water consumption, problems in water supply, situation of drainage, environmental condition, investments made on WASH services, extent of involvement of local bodies/ communities etc in WASH. The narratives for 107 villages were prepared in Telugu and the copies were shared during field work.

Formation of Teams

For easy coordination and effective implementation, the resource persons were formed into 7 teams, with at least one woman member. The woman member is essential for educating adolescent girls and women on personal hygiene. One of the members is made as team leader, which is rotated from village to village. The roles and responsibilities of members in the team were explained. The list of habitations along with contact (phone) numbers of key informants and representatives of local body were given to the teams for easy coordination of field work.

Plan for Field Work

The resource persons were hired for a month by paying a consolidated honorarium. Each team has to spend two days per habitation with a minimum of six interventions. Each team has to cover 12 habitations in a month with six days for report writing. The team leader has to review and plan activities from time to time for accomplishing the target. The team leader has to co-ordinate with schools, local bodies, peoples' representatives, and support other team members. The teams have flexibility to plan and execute the village level interventions based on the availability of communities/ target groups. However, the following schedule was suggested for field work:

Proposed Plan for Field Work	Day 0			Day 1			Day 2		
	Morning	Afternoon	Night	Morning	Afternoon	Night	Morning	Afternoon	night
1. Communication to the concerned village		■							
2. Reaching the village			■						
3. Interacting with elders/ key informants/ people reps			■						
4. Conducting triggering exercise				■					
5. Focused group discussions with adolescent girls				■	■				
6. Rally with school children				■	■				
7. Focused group discussions with women groups						■			
8. <i>Shramadaan</i> activity							■		
9. Convening Gram Sabha and sharing research findings								■	
10. Communication to the next village									■
11. Reaching the village									■

Execution of Field Work

Focused Group Discussions on Personal Hygiene

The focused group discussions on personal hygiene with adolescent girls were conducted in 90 habitations. The resource persons took the help of *anganwadi* teacher and/ or ANM worker for mobilizing the adolescent girls for these discussions. The women member in the team facilitated the discussions. The discussions were centred on the sub-themes of personal hygiene such as changes in body, menstrual cycle, use of sanitary napkins, water borne diseases, toilets usage, hand wash practices, balanced diet etc. The flip charts printed and distributed by the Integrated Child Development Services were used for educating the target group on personal hygiene. Girls were encouraged to clarify their doubts by asking questions. The resource persons apart from providing information demonstrated some of the practices.



The girls informed that neither their parents nor teachers are educating them on the care to be taken during menstrual cycle, washing hands particularly before taking food etc. A majority of them said that they will insist upon their parents for construction and use of toilets. In addition, they promised that they will educate their family members on hygiene aspects and also ensure that all members practice them.

Triggering Exercise

The triggering exercise was conducted in 90 habitations and information on causes and effects of open defecation was disseminated for bringing behavioural change. The time and place for the triggering exercise was communicated through *dandora*. In few habitations, the staff (*kavalivallu*) of local body went from door to door to give this information. The representatives of local body also extended support in mobilizing the communities for this exercise. Women, men - old and young, representatives and staff of local body participated. The following activities were conducted in series for understanding the causes and effects of open defecation (OD):



- Identifying places of OD with community through a walk in and around village;
- Marking water sources, water points etc in social and resource map;
- Marking OD places in social and resource map with yellow colour;
- Calculating the production of faecal matter in the village in a day/ week/ month/ year;
- Analyzing process of faecal matter decomposition/ evaporation/ reaching water sources;
- Assessing the quantities of faecal matter in-take through food, water, etc. using 5 Fs concept;

- Calculation of economic losses (loss of person-days, medical bills, doctor fee etc) just because of illness;
- Relating the analysis with the reality in the village;
- Distributing the pamphlets on importance of construction and usage of toilets and roles & responsibilities of Village Water and Sanitation Committee.



How much faecal matter a village generates? A Case of Kotturu Village

Triggering exercise was conducted on 15th and 16th June 2011 in *Ch. Kotturu*, a small hamlet with 360 persons living in 98 houses in Nakkapalli mandal of Visakhapatnam District. About 100 people including men, women, adolescent girls and boys participated in the exercise. Water sources and spots for open defecation were indicated in social and resource map. Later calculation of production of faecal matter was initiated. Only 4 households in the village are having toilets. Even among them only 2 families are using the toilets. This means about 352 persons are defecating in open areas every day. The facilitators started calculating the production of faecal matters in the village by posing the probing questions such as how many times a person defecates in a day? How much weight it would be? If so, how much faecal matter is generated from 350 persons in a day, for a week, for a month, for a year? The calculations based on the responses are:

- One person defecates 250 grams in a day.
- 87.50 Kgs of faecal matter is generated in a day from 350 persons.
- 612.50 Kgs in a week.
- 2625 Kgs in a month.
- 31500 Kgs in a year.

The facilitators further probed on where this faecal matter is going? The community members mentioned that it is decomposing. Again the facilitators probed. The responses are evaporation; mixing in rain water and reaching to water sources; etc. At this juncture, the facilitators explained how the faecal matter is reaching to human beings and causing disease. Using flipcharts, the facilitators also explained how the faecal matter is likely to reach food chain. The discussion crystallized the importance of sanitary practices and household latrine.

This process was facilitated by resource persons with clarity in roles/ task/ theme. At the end of the exercise, the villagers were asked to share their responses. Some of these are:

- "Realized the importance of construction and use of toilets."
- "Its' important to me too keep my mother, wife and daughters at comfortable place in the society, so, I will construct toilet immediately."
- "I am poor and don't have place for construction of toilet; hence, I use 'cat' method." (A cat digs up the earth and after defecating covers it up with soil, this is known as 'cat' method.)

It can be said that the triggering exercises reinforced the message of sanitation and hygiene and renewed the commitment of the rural communities towards this end.

Hand Wash Demonstration

Hand wash was demonstrated in schools, and in meetings with adolescent girls and women. This practice prevents 70 percent of diseases. The objective was to inculcate this habit in children and women. The resource persons obtained the permission of school headmaster for demonstrating hand wash along with personal hygiene practices. All students studying in school are assembled at one place. Initially, there is brainstorming session with students on personal hygiene; hand wash practices, etc followed by demonstrating the six steps in washing hands and timings or situations for washing hands. The video clips and posters collected from UNICEF were screened and/ or used for educating the target groups. The children and women were also taught the importance of covering (food) vessels and safe drinking water handling practices. The children were suggested to share this information with their parents.



Rallies

Rallies were conducted for dissemination of information on safe water, importance of using toilets, environmental sanitation etc. The rallies were taken up with the students of primary/ upper primary/ higher secondary school the village. The school teachers and *vidya* volunteers also participated in the rallies. Information on safe drinking water, importance of using toilets and environmental sanitation was disseminated by placards and also by slogans. People hearing the slogans came out from their homes and enquired about the rally. Their doubts were clarified by teachers, *vidya* volunteers and resource persons. This method enabled to spread the message in the entire habitation.



Cleaning Surroundings of Water Points (Shramadaan – Voluntary labour)

The research discloses that surroundings of a majority of water points are un-hygienic and that the water is prone to contamination. Hence, the surroundings of the water points were cleaned under *shramadaan*. The representatives of local bodies, citizen leaders, youth, teachers etc participated in the *shramadaan* in a majority of habitations. The citizen leaders and local body representatives helped in mobilizing communities for *shramadaan*. The waste materials such as plastic bags, papers, useless plants were removed; the low lying areas or pits in which waste water stagnates were filled with sand; bleaching powder was applied around water points etc. Hand wash method was also demonstrated at the end of the activity. With this, the members' involved in *shramadaan* activity got better understanding on importance of cleaning the surroundings of water points on regular basis. Mobilizing communities for *shramadaan* was difficult in some localities. People are averse to involve in the activity due



lacking of awareness/ education. In few localities people felt that cleaning the roads, drains and surroundings of water points is the responsibility of the local body.

Sharing Research Findings and Observations in Gram Sabha

The Gram Sabha was convened in all the habitations with the help of local body representatives. The information such as purpose of convening Gram Sabha, place and date of convening gram sabha was disseminated through 'dandora'. The process followed while conducting the Gram Sabha is:

- Explained the purpose of convening Gram Sabha;
- Shared the series of activities conducted in the village during the two days;
- Read out village narrative and explained the situation/ status of WASH services in village;
- Explained the importance of cleaning the surroundings of water points;
- Status of open defecation and percentage of households using the toilets;
- Importance of testing water quality on periodical basis;
- Importance of forming Village Water and Sanitation Committee;
- Roles and responsibilities of local bodies and communities in improving access to WASH;
- Distributed the pamphlets/ brochures printed for the purpose;
- Facilitated the discussion between communities and representatives of local bodies on sanctioning of toilets, cleaning of drainage lines, cleaning of roads, cleaning of surroundings of water points etc;
- Vote of thanks.



The decisions and/ or mutual consensus that emerged during the discussions were passed as Gram Sabha resolution(s). The key points/ decisions in the resolutions are:

- Sanctioning of toilets to poorest of the poor families on priority basis;
- Establishing convergence with local banks/ micro finance institutions/ departments for providing sanitary facilities in the village;
- Promoting a committee for monitoring the usage of toilets in the habitation;
- Discussing WASH as an agenda point in the meetings of self-help groups and village organizations;
- Local bodies cleaning the roads, drains, and surroundings of water points on regular basis.

Dispatching Post Cards

The post cards collected from communities of 90 habitations were dispatched in September, 2011.

This acts as reminder on their decision and commitment for construction and use of toilets as well as practicing personal hygiene methods etc.



Support/ Supervision Mechanisms

The field work of the resource persons was monitored on day-to-day basis and they were provided timely hand-holding support. The support/ supervision mechanisms adopted for effective implementation are:

Visits for Providing Onsite Support as well as Monitoring

Mr. Subramanyam Naidu and Ms. Nalini (from WASSAN) made frequent visits to the project sites; reviewed the progress of activities in the habitations; resolved the differences among the team members; supplied the necessary materials such as stationary, colour powders etc.

Ms. Sirisha, and Ms. Snehalatha (from CESS) made visits to the habitations. They reviewed the progress of habitation level interventions and interacted with communities for assessing the outreach of the message and provided necessary backup support.

Review of Progress

The resource persons informed Ms. Nalini about the progress of conducting interventions at habitation level. The problem in mobilization of communities has been solved by liaising with representatives of local bodies from Hyderabad over phone. At the same time, the opinion of people representatives on effectiveness of spreading key messages in the village was gathered. The suggestions for improvement in the strategy for carrying of habitation level interventions were informed to the resource persons from time to time.

Learning's and Observations

- The methodology deployed for dissemination of key messages is quite appropriate.
- The adolescent girls who participated in the focused group discussions felt that they aren't educated by their parents and teachers on care to be taken during menstrual cycle, washing hands particularly before taking food etc.
- The triggering exercise conducted for communicating the affects of open defecation created a desire in people for construction and use of toilets. Some felt that they need to keep their mother, wife and daughter at comfortable zone; hence, they decided for construction of toilet immediately in their household premises. The households that don't have space for construction toilet decided to use 'cat' method for minimizing the problems.
- Villagers agreed to adopt and practice hand wash.
- People agreed to change their behaviour relating to open defecation and hygiene practices.
- SHGs and VO's members said they will discuss issues relating to WASH regularly in their meetings.
- Adolescent girls got awareness and clarity on advantages and disadvantages of child marriages. Similarly, they acquired some knowledge on personal hygiene.
- In areas where schedule caste communities live, there are no basic facilities such as drinking water etc.
- People are prone to jaundice, fever and other illnesses due to polluted water (Guntur district).
- Bills for Individual Sanitary Latrines were pending (Prakasam District).
- Water was completely polluted during floods and there is no alternative source due to the negligence of Government/ Gram Panchayat
- People wanted the NGO to take up advocacy with Government regarding drinking water and construction of toilets in the villages.

Sustaining Efforts for Behavioural Change

Other important lessons from this exercise are:

1. There is a need for generating new knowledge continuously from action research and share this back to users of knowledge (community members/ departments/ representatives of local institutions). The cycle of generating knowledge, sharing and using it needs to be completed, through systematic efforts and institutional arrangements.
2. One-Time-Events cannot bring desired results in WASH sector. However, there is a need to make a beginning.
3. Triggering real shifts in the priorities of the concerned departments (from expenditure on construction of WASH facilities to promotion of effective use of WASH facilities to behavioural changes at personal/ community level) is a major challenge. This is a long term agenda for advocacy groups, civil society organizations and action research projects.

Annexure 1: List of Resource Persons

1. Mr. Govindaswamy	Consultant – RWSS
2. Mr. Muniraman	Consultant – RWSS
3. Mr. Karunakar	Consultant – RWSS
4. Ms. Revathi	Consultant – RWSS
5. Ms. Savithri	Consultant – RWSS
6. Ms. Swapna	Consultant – RWSS
7. Ms. Parvathi	Consultant – RWSS
8. Ms. Sathyavani	Consultant – RWSS
9. Ms. Shakila Begum	Consultant – RWSS
10. Mr. Raju	Consultant – RWSS
11. Mr. Ramesh	WASHCost Investigator
12. Ms. Vijaya Lakshmi	WASHCost Investigator
13. Ms. Ramulamma	WASHCost Investigator
14. Mr. Appala Naidu	WASHCost Investigator
15. Mr. Raju K	WASHCost Investigator
16. Mr. Sathyanarayana	WASHCost Investigator
17. Mr. Bansilal	WASHCost Investigator
18. Mr. Baddiletiswamy	WASHCost Investigator
19. Mr. Yadaiah	WASHCost Investigator
20. Mr. Raghavendar	WASHCost Investigator
21. Mr. Srinivasulu Reddy	WASHCost Investigator

Annexure 2: List of Habitations

District	Habitation	District	Habitation
Ananthapur	1. Korivipalli	Vijayanagaram	48. Tekkalivanivalasa
	2. M. Yerraballi		49. Chepalakancheru
	3. RallaAnathapur		50. V. Dasaripeta
	4. Mukthapuram	Vishakapatnam	51. Pappuduvalasa
Kurnool	5. Chinnagonehal		52. Padmapuram
	6. Gargeyapuram		53. Ravvalaguda
	7. Mitnal		54. Taruva
	8. Khyruppal		55. Kothuru
	9. Alwal		56. Boduvalasa
East Godavari	10. P. Veerapalem		57. Dibbadipalem
	11. Buchampeta		58. Mangalapuram
	12. Magasanitippa		59 Pitlapalem
	13. Peddatadapalli		60. Ch. Kotturu
West Godavari	14. Vempa	Prakasam	61. Cherukupadu
	15. Marritippa		62. Muslipalli
	16. Laxmaneswaram		63. Seetharnagaram
	17. Peddalanka		64. Ramkuru
Nizamabad	18. Wadi	Guntur	65. Narakulapadu
	19. Pacchalanadikudi		66. Sirangipalame
	20. Rangampeta		67. Nagireddypalame
	21. Koratpalli		68. Anupalem
Chittoor	22. Vettalataduku		69. Gramalapadu
	23. Keelagram		70. Avulavaripalem
	24. Brahmanthangal	Krishna	71. Konduru
	25. Ankiesttipalli		72. Chorampudi
Kadapa	26. N.Palagiri		73. Obulapuram
	27. Palamuru	Adilabad	74. Jamdapur
	28. Ayyavaripalli		75. Kuchalapur
	29. Ramireddypalli		76. Talamadri
Nellore	30. Awanipuram	Medak	77. KamKole
	31. Pandipadu		78. Machireddipalli
	32. Sankaranagaram		79. Enkepalli
	33. Paturivarikandriga	Khammam	80. Mangalithanda
Vijayanagaram	34. Komatisatram		81. Venkatapuram
	35. Mendangi	Warangal	82. Mallial
	36. Kakulavanivalasa		83. Pembarthi
	37. Sikkalabai	Mahabubnagar	84. Kistaram
	38. Korukondapalem		85. Cheenipad
	39. Chamalapalli	Nalgonda	86. Malkapur
	40. P. Levidi		87. Gopalapuram
	41. Tadikonda	Ranga Reddy	88. Tuleklam
Srikakulam	42. Vedullavalasa		89. Khanapur
	43. Madhupuram		90. Ramdaspalli
	44. Somagandi		
	45. Challavanipeta		
	46. Annupuram		
	47. Kinthali		

Photo-gallery

