

FEBRUARY 2023 | SIDDIPET, TELANGANA.

TRANSFORMING SIDDIPET

A DEEP DIVE INTO A STUPENDOUS SWM SUCCESS STORY



• INSIDE

The pages contain information on how it all began, what has been achieved and how the winds of change swept over Siddipet with fascinating imprints like clean roads with no black spots around, cleaner air, walls adorned with creative artistic expressions, landscaped medians with trees that can breathe through their roots, dry waste resource centres, large-scale composting facilities and much more.

LEFT: SWMRT Member Dr Shanthi with Telangana Minister for Finance, Medical, Health and Family Welfare T Harish Rao at Swachh Badi inauguration in April 2021.

BELOW: Minister Rao addresses a large gathering in Siddipet. He has lent his all-out support to this project and continues to do so.

NOTHING SUCCEEDS LIKE SUCCESS

Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche once put it beautifully that "He who has a WHY to live can bear almost any HOW."

When SWMRT launched its mammoth campaign three years ago in Siddipet, Telangana, led by Dr Shanthi Tummala, little did we know that it would transform this city of nearly 1,30,000 population with about 30,000 households into a world-class example where scientific, holistic and thoughtful SWM principles would be followed to the extent that the "My waste is my responsibility" ethos would assume a newer and higher meaning.

The effects are felt everywhere. The interesting thing is we at SWMRT not only knew the WHYS. We knew the HOWs too! What we needed was a platform to prove the same. Siddipet is a shining example of what can be achieved when we have solid political backing, ground support and people's whole-hearted participation.



Photo credits: Dr Shanthi Tummala, members of SWMRT team and the Siddipet team.

THE BEGINNING...



Dr Shanthi during one of her door-to-door campaigns to create awareness on the importance of three-way waste segregation at source.

Located around 100 km north of Hyderabad, Siddipet is a municipal city and the headquarter of Siddipet district in Telangana. Spanning across 36 sq km with 43 municipal wards, Siddipet has around 1,30,000 residents and 30,000 households as of 2020.

On January 22, 2020, an SWM workshop was conducted by Saahas at SwachaGraha Kalika Kendra (SGKK) in Bangalore. It was attended by some elected representatives from Karnataka, Kerala and Telangana. Dr Shanthi, a member of SWMRT, was one of the key session-holders on that day. The session inspired Siddipet corporator Deepthi Nagaraju so much that she invited Dr Shanthi to Siddipet on February 15, 2020, to help revamp waste management practices in Siddipet. Dr Shanthi obliged.

In a very short span, Siddipet achieved what many municipalities could only dream about for the longest time with respect to SWM. The key factors that have been instrumental to Siddipet's success are the able guidance and commitment of Dr Shanthi, the unprecedented political will of Minister Harish Rao, the unwavering support extended by public officials and on-ground volunteers, and the commendable compliance by the people of Siddipet.

TIMELINE

Feb 20, 2020	SWMRT member Dr Shanthi's first visit to Siddipet.
Feb 25, 2020	Three-way segregated waste collection initiated in Ward 1.
Feb 26, 2020	A temporary facility commenced for processing wet waste generated in all the wards.
March 16, 2020	Penalty imposition initiated for littering & non-compliance
March 17, 2020	Plastic ban implemented.
March 18, 2020	3 - way segregated waste collection initiated in 6 wards.
March 31, 2020	3 - way segregated waste collection initiated in all the wards.
May 24, 2020	Inauguration of Ward 1 Wet Waste Processing facility (1MT/day), Ward 4 Wet Waste Processing facility (2MT/day) and Dry waste Resource Collection Centre (DRCC).
June 7, 2020	Stainless steel banks across 34 wards commenced.
July 22, 2020	Training given to 10 women on stitching cloth pads.
April 21, 2021	Inauguration of Swachh Badi.
Aug 1, 2021	Celebrity Shilpa Reddy and business strategist consultant Kanthi Dutt from Hyderabad visit Swachh Badi.



If "Catch 'em young" is the mantra, then this is how it is done! Dr Shanthi gets down brass tacks at a school in Siddipet explaining the sanctity of three Rs to the children.

AWARENESS, TRAINING & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Dr Shanthi addressing an audience in Siddipet on the importance of three-way segregation, composting and related matters. A series of such awareness sessions have been held in the city over three years to help people understand the concept thoroughly.

DOOR-TO-DOOR CAMPAIGN

Right from the word go, door-to-door awareness campaigns have been central to the Siddipet official gameplan. Be it the three-way segregation, steel bank, plastic ban or any other initiative, from top elected representatives to on-ground support staff, all would go knocking on every door to inform about the new initiative, explain the need for it and inform what is expected of the residents. This remains one of the main reasons for Siddipet's success as it not only helped to reach out to a maximum number of people but also allay their apprehensions and take feedback directly.

TRAINING PROGRAMMES

To make sure the residents were equipped with the WHYs and HOWs of SWM, experts from Bangalore were invited to conduct training sessions on various aspects. These sessions targeted all kinds of stakeholders in Siddipet: elected representatives, anganwadi workers, residential communities, doctors, students, teachers, watchmen, priests, commercial vendors and more.

ANNOUNCEMENT VEHICLES

To reinforce the importance to avoid plastic/other single-use disposable (SUDs) and remind Siddipet residents of the penalties imposed in case of non-compliance, announcements are made daily across Siddipet.

For this, a speaker which plays recorded audio messages is attached to every municipality's door-to-door waste collection vehicle. The recording is played repeatedly while the vehicle is out to collect waste every day.

When the plastic ban was implemented in Integrated Market and for commercial vendors across Siddipet, the same approach was adopted.



Divide and conquer is now a daily routine for all the 1,30,000+ residents of Siddipet. The well-trained municipality workers instantly spot the mistakes, if any, and guide the residents to do better the next time. Councillor Vinod Goud (left) oversees

SOURCE SEGREGATION & MONITORING



ABOVE: Councillor Deepthi Nagraj (right) chats up with a resident on source segregation.

BELOW: Even a well-planned segregation plan can bite the dust if monitoring is not up to the mark. Here, a municipality official takes stock of the segregation quality in front of a resident's house.



THREE-TIER SEGREGATION

The three-way segregation method is mandated across 43 wards of Siddipet where the 2bin1bag model has been implemented: two bins for wet waste and reject waste, one bag for dry waste. The municipality collects wet waste on five days a week, dry waste on two days a week and reject waste on six days a week.

Households and commercial establishments that do not comply are penalised. It is commendable that Siddipet managed to achieve more than 95% compliance level in just one month. This became possible due to the strong and continued involvement of the elected representatives and the on-ground team in creating awareness and monitoring on a day-to-day basis.

MONITORING

Any good policy/regulation brings about intended change only when it is implemented, monitored and sustained effectively. To ensure that all the good SWM practices that started in Siddipet are followed, several monitoring initiatives have been put in place. Penalty drives are held frequently by elected representatives, sanitary officials, resource persons (social workers appointed by the municipality for each ward) and other team members. Penalty is imposed if three-way segregation is violated by any household/commercial entity. The same goes with plastic ban as well. The severity of the penalty depends on multiple parameters such as the number of warnings given, the quantity of banned plastic siezed, the size of the establishment, etc.

For at least five days a week, every ward councillor accompanies the household collection process to not only examine but also enquire with residents if there are any issues and suggestions. The Sanitary Inspector visits every ward once a month. The two RPs assigned to each ward also continuously monitor the situation on the ground and inform higher authorities if any households fail to comply. These households are penalised accordingly.

Night patrolling is carried out to nab those who dump waste on the roadside creating black spots. Once identified, a penalty is imposed and a warning is given against dumping. These black spots are cleared and monitored during patrols to ensure dumping does not take place again.

CCTV cameras have also been installed at important junctions to identify the violators of roadside dumping.

WASTE COLLECTION & TRANSPORT



HOUSEHOLD COLLECTION

The three-way segregation method implemented across all the 43 wards in Siddipet can only sustain if the collection process supports it. So, the Siddipet municipality does door-to-door collection of household waste for each category. Accordingly, wet waste is collected four days a week (Mon, Wed, Thu, Sat), dry waste two days a week (Tue, Fri) and reject waste six days a week (Mon to Sat).

Collection begins at 5:30 am and goes on till 9:00 am. One Tata Ace tipper vehicle is allotted to each ward. Each vehicle has a support staff member in addition to the driver. Dry waste collected from households is further divided into six categories in the vehicle on the move. The workers hang big sacks of waste segregated into six categories on hook-loader vehicles.

Dr Shanthi (in red outfit) oversees the way in which the waste is being collected and loaded into the transport vehicle.

SWM DASHBOARD

STATIONARY COMPACTOR

- A shed with two units in repair condition.
- Receives wet waste being sent to bio CNG unit at Busapur.
- Hook-loader vehicle available.

STREET SWEEPING

- Sweeping in 2 shifts: 10pm to 5am night shift; morning 6am to 2pm.
- Women sweepers do both night and day shifts.
- One sweeper per ward (internal roads). 43 wards in all
- Supervision by one jawan.
- Three vehicles allotted for street sweeping collection including black spot clearance

COMMERCIAL COLLECTION

Earlier, commercial waste was handled by private contractors but now, it is handled by Basil Foundation which runs its own vehicles on user-fee model.

Four tractors are assigned for commercial waste collection across all the wards and mixed waste is not accepted. All waste categories are collected six days a week where the collection happens in the afternoon.



A transport vehicle stops by to collect segregated waste from a resident. Such vehicles are fitted with a speaker which keeps playing the segregation norms over and again to drive home the message.



POST WASTE COLLECTION



WET WASTE

Vehicles from Wards 1 and 4 go to their respective decentralised processing facilities. Vehicles from other wards go to the transfer station where they unload the waste into a compactor.

This compactor goes to Busapur where the wet waste is processed in heaps. The same process is followed for commercial wet waste as well.



DRY WASTE

Vehicles from all the 43 wards reach Dry Resource Collection Center (DRCC) where the waste is dropped off. Dry waste gets further segregated here, bailed by category and stored. ITC buys all the dry waste.

REJECT WASTE

Vehicles from all the wards go to the transfer station where they unload the waste into a compactor. This compactor goes to a landfill in Busapur.

ABOVE: Waste processing centres, both wet and dry, work day in and day out to make sure that maximum resource recovery of the waste brought inside happens.

(Clockwise): 1. A composting yard. 2. The Dry Waste Resource Centre. 3. An incinerator for reject/hazardous waste.

REVIEW BY THE MINISTER

Once a month, Minister Harish Rao holds a review meeting with all the commissioners, collectors, councillors, corporators, sanitary inspectors, RPs and other officials and takes stock of the situation. He calls for a meeting more than once a month if he finds any uncalled-for delays in the deliveries promised.

As seen in the picture on the left, Minister Rao goes door to door and personally examines the quality of segregation done by the residents and commercial establishments to make people realise how serious the administration is about their ambitious Clean Siddipet Campaign.



DRY WASTE RESOURCE CENTRE



If not segregated, then it's garbage. The waste we generate each day becomes waste only because it is segregated for resource recovery.

In case of dry waste, secondary segregation is of utmost importance to derive the value of each category of waste for reuse or recycling.

Accordingly, DRCCs have been set up in Siddipet which absorb all the neatly segregated dry waste. The load is brought in by the vehicles from all the 43 wards. Dry waste gets further segregated here, bailed by category and stored. ITC bails all the dry waste.

WASTE QUANTIFICATION - RESIDENTIAL

WASTE TYPE	DAILY GENERATION (TONNES)	COLLECTION FREQUENCY (NUMBER OF DAYS)
WET	19	4
DRY	1.7	2
SANITARY	0.7	4
MIXED	2	4
TOTAL	23	6

BIOMINING

Busapur has a landfill in which waste from Siddipet used to be dumped before the SWM project began. In order to recover useful material from the landfill, biomining process began in December 2022.

TRANSFER STATION

The transfer station is located next to the DRCC.

SWM DASHBOARD

DRCC- DRY WASTE RECOVERY CENTRE

- Two sheds of about 10 to 12,000 sq ft dimensions.
- One of them located within the city, the other at Busapur landfill.
- Weekly intake of about 6 to 7 tonnes (collection happens twice a week)
- The DRCC has a waste conveyer belt and a bailing machine.
- RDF is sent to Orient Cement or Ultratech. This operation is temporarily halted.
- Earlier, the operator was ITC. Now, it is Earth Box from Warangal.
- At Busapur landfill, the unit is operated by Kadarish.
- RDF recovery from the landfill site.
- Workers are paid Rs. 450 a day.
- Material sent to Hyderabad.
- A new DRCC is also being set up. It is well laid out to improve sorting and managing efficiency.



LARGE-SCALE COMPOSTING & BIO-CNG



Once segregation falls in place, composting becomes a far easier task than otherwise. With excellent segregation levels across the city, tonnes of kitchen waste comes out of over 30,000 households which get processed at large-scale composting yards.

TANK COMPOSTING

A tank composting facility has been set up in Ward 4 where 800-900 kg of wet waste is processed per day through eight pairs of tanks separated by a perforated wall partition in the centre. Each pair has a capacity of 4,000 kgs with dimensions of 11 X 11 x 2.5 Cu.ft. A leaf shredder and a chopper are used to chop the waste into smaller particles to speed up the process. Three workers manage this composting facility.

HEAP COMPOSTING

Heap composting takes place in Ward 1 where two tonnes of wet waste is processed daily by three workers. This facility also uses a shredder.

ABOVE: The facade of a tank composting unit in Siddipet.
BELOW (clockwise): 1. Minister Rao checks out freshly harvested compost.
2. The Commissioner of Police with freshly harvested compost on her office premises. 3. Heaps of well-produced compost at a yard.



SWM DASHBOARD
MICRO SHED COMPOSTING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ward: 10 tanks. • Ward 6-7: Located in Mandapally. • Lingareddy Pally (open heap system + 6 tanks). • Swachha Badi – up to 1 tonne a day. <p>All centres take up to 500 kgs of wet waste and follow aerobic digestion composting and vermicomposting methods.</p>



The newly constructed bio-CNG plant is swank and housed in the SWM yard near the Busapur landfill. This plant processes 10 tonnes of the wet waste generated in Siddipet and the remaining about 10 tonnes is composted. The way in which the composting yards and the bio-CNG plant work in tandem demonstrates the attention-to-detail that has gone into the integrated design approach to resolve one of the trickiest last-mile tasks of SWM. The bottled bio-CNG is being supplied to a prominent hotel kitchen. Plans are afoot to sell the compost to farmers. Minister Rao was the first to buy the compost for his land.

BRING-YOUR-OWN-STEEL-BOX CAMPAIGN



ABOVE: Minister Rao, Dr Shanthi and various officials, ground support teams and residents take a pledge to shun plastic/SUDs and replace them with steel and similar sustainable alternatives.

BELOW: Glimpses of the effects after banning plastic and SUDs and establishing steel plate and cutlery banks in Siddipet.

The Integrated Model Market (IMM) in Siddipet is a one-of-its-kind indoor market space covering 6.1 acres of land. It is a one-stop destination dotted with around 108 stalls selling vegetables, fruits, meat, grocery and more. As a result, sellers and buyers are bound to generate a lot of disposables or plastic/paper shopping bags used for packaging meat. To curb this practice, as a first step, it has been made mandatory that meat should be sold in steel boxes only. Meat buyers should either get their own boxes or buy the boxes sold in the market for this reason alone. To encourage compliance, steel boxes were sold at half the price for a few days when the campaign began. Sellers are fined if found using plastic covers.

PLASTIC BAN

Single-use plastics are banned across all function halls, meat shops, vegetable and fruit markets, eateries, curry points and restaurants. The list is bound to grow as the plastic ban in Siddipet is evolving rapidly.



BRING YOUR OWN CLOTH BAG CAMPAIGN

All the buyers are encouraged to use cloth bags for shopping. Multiple SHGs began stitching cloth bags due to increased awareness and demand.

ZERO-WASTE VENDORS

Multiple roadside vendors have come onboard to reduce waste in their establishments. Eg: Sugarcane juice stalls, jalebi vendors, etc.



STAINLESS STEEL BANKS



Siddipet has been proactive not only in policy making and implementation towards zero waste but also in devising hitherto unheard-of solutions that can help the residents adopt a zero-waste lifestyle with ease. One such effort is establishing a steel bank in almost every ward of Siddipet—34 steel banks, in all —making zero-waste events easy to plan and execute.

After establishing steel banks, used paper cups and other disposables are being rejected during household waste collection.

This is to once again hammer the message into the collective consciousness that even though segregated, certain non-biodegradables are not accepted. This measure also puts pressure on the people to utilise steel banks.

STEEL IS THE NEW GOLD: Since stainless steel is the best sustainable alternative which can be washed and reused countless times, the Siddipet administration has been enthusiastically establishing cutlery and plate banks and encouraging people to use the same in medium-to-large gatherings. Along with his efficient team, Minister Rao is explaining the concept to the Siddipet people. Below are some glimpses that show how popular the scheme has become across all sections of the society.



SUSTAINABLE MENSTRUATION & 'RUTHU PREMA'



AWARENESS

Multiple awareness sessions were conducted by experts at several locations in Siddipet for women from all walks of life: students, parents, government officials, nurses, residents from surrounding villages and more.

The scale of the outreach programmes has been significant with the campaign creating awareness among at least over 25,000 women and girls during these sessions.

Post these sessions, many women showed interest in switching to cloth pads and menstrual cups.

GREENING THE RED: Sustainable menstruation becomes achievable only when awareness is followed up with offering safe and reusable alternatives. The 'Ruthu Prema' or 'Period Love' campaign does just that. The images speak volumes for the same.

RUTHU PREMA

The government of Telangana launched an initiative titled 'Ruthu Prema' in May 2022. The objective of the campaign was to raise awareness on sustainable menstrual products and destigmatize menstruation. This pilot campaign was run by StoneSoup Trust, Setwin, SPV, Rotary West Bengaluru and SWMRT. As part of the pilot initiative, Health Minister T Harish Rao distributed sanitary cups, pads and cloth diapers to residents of Ward 5, Siddipet.

Additional Collector Muzamil Khan, IAS, and Commissioner of Police N Shwetha have been relentlessly trying to spread the message in other districts. Initially, Dr Shanthi introduced and trained ward councillors, district panchayat officers and panchayat secretaries. The master trainers organised programmes to raise awareness among adolescent girls and women in different clusters. The trainers collaborated with self-help groups (SHGs) to reach out to a larger audience.



(Clockwise from top): 1: Malini Parmar from Stonesoup Trust and SWMRT Member Dr Meenakshi Bharath join hands with Dr Shanthi (far right) at the launch of Ruthu Prema in Siddipet. 2 & 3: Glimpses of the outreach programmes. 3: A young girl proudly shows off her new safe SM alternatives.

LIVELIHOOD THROUGH SELF-SUFFICIENCY



WOMEN RUN STEEL BANKS IN SIDDIPET

When you want a scheme to succeed, rope in the womenfolk. The government has sought the co-operation of women self-help groups to establish and run these banks so that its Clean Siddipet campaign achieves desired milestones sooner than later.

A steel bank is where the residents can get steel cutlery, steel plates and other items on rent if there is an event to be organised. Every steel bank in Siddipet has made available 14 steel items that are sufficient for a gathering of 750 people. All 34 banks together can provide steel items sufficient for a gathering of 25,500 people. The size of a steel bank, on an average, is 8 x 10 sq ft. The rates are so economical that it turns out to be cheaper for the residents to rent steel items than purchase disposable ones.

STITCHING A TALE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Siddipet aims to become self-sufficient in cloth pads manufacturing by setting up units run by its residents. This will open up livelihood opportunities in two areas: tailoring and sale of cloth pads. As part of this project, Siddipet councillor Deepthi Nagaraju organised an online training in cloth pads stitching for 10 women in Siddipet. One local jute bags production centre was used for the purpose. The training was conducted by Bangalore-based experts. The women paid half the cost of training while the municipality paid the rest.

Once the women gain required expertise, production will commence and the resource persons will sell the products in their respective wards. The proceeds from the sales will be distributed among tailors, RPs and councillors to bear the cost of running the facility, packaging and other overheads. The facility will also have cloth bags, menstrual cups and other sustainable products along with cloth pads and will be named "Siddipet Eco-friendly Unit".



SWACHH BADI

On April 21, 2020, Swachh Badi Centre was inaugurated in Siddipet, Telangana. Swachh Badi is a solid waste management learning centre, a first-of-its-kind project in Telangana.

This project has been modelled on the lines of the SwachaGraha Kalika Kendra (SGKK), Bangalore, curated by SWMRT.

Similarly, SGKK plays host to live composting models to help visitors choose a suitable solution for their homes or communities. That apart, information on all aspects concerning SWM can be accessed here.



Swachh Badi inauguration: Several SWMRT members including Dr Shanthi and Minister Rao celebrate the sweet success of having established the learning centre which is studded with both practical and aesthetic values.

Swachh Badi aims to promote holistic learning, widespread adoption of composting and growing safe food: a step towards achieving a zero-waste Siddipet. The centre is beautifully designed with informative and eye-catching artwork that make learning experiential. It has been set up as a collaborative effort by the municipal council of Siddipet with the support of the Government of Telangana. SWMRT is the knowledge partner and Foley designs is the design partner for this centre.



ABOVE: Some glimpses at the opening event. Dr Shanthi explains the finer details of Swachh Badi to Minister Rao.

LEFT: Mr Rao gets his hands dirty with kitchen waste composting at Swachh Badi.

'A ROLLER COASTER RIDE'

By Dr Shanthi Tummala

Three years have whizzed past and when I look back at them, it feels like a mind-blowing roller coaster ride. What has been achieved in Siddipet with the help of various stakeholders, especially its residents, is a matter of pride for anybody who got involved in the campaign.

I did not know where I was headed when I first visited Siddipet three years ago. But things started falling in place mainly because the person who was helming the affairs was serious about what needed to be achieved. That was Telangana Minister for Finance, Medical, Health and Family Welfare T Harish Rao. A politician of rare environmental consciousness and leadership qualities who took interest in changing people's behaviour—something we don't get to see often. My heartfelt thanks to him for his all-out support.

Once we sat down with the municipality officials and ground support staff to chalk out the course for the 'Clean Siddipet' campaign, we knew what we were staring at. It was a massive campaign involving over 1,30,000 people and 43 wards. But we persisted keeping in mind what needed to be done and never veered off the track. This is where political support plays a major role. Minister Rao would criss-cross the city in his vehicle to make the officials and people understand what this whole campaign meant to him and how serious he was to make it a success. He personally inspected the segregated waste during door-to-door visits and spoke openly about taboo topics like sustainable menstruation. He listened patiently to experts, gathered inputs from all corners and got the same implemented on ground. The officials responded beautifully and so did the people, vendors and all the other stakeholders involved.



LEADING THE WAY: Telangana Minister for Finance, Medical, Health and Family Welfare T Harish Rao (left) sets an example by buying compost from the Siddipet composting yards where all the kitchen and other biodegradable rejects like dry leaves undergo transformation to become nutritious compost. To allay any fears about the quality of the compost, he decided to buy the same and apply it for his own agricultural farm.

Within a short span, we started processing all the segregated wet waste and got it transformed into wonderful, nice-smelling compost. The dry waste was efficiently sorted and sent for recycling or co-processing. Our ambitious and pet project 'Ruthu Prema' (Period Love) broke the societal barriers by promoting sustainable menstruation alternatives. This project went a step ahead and started focusing on livelihood through self-sufficiency. Similarly, plastic ban, steel banks and several such sensible moves made a huge difference to sustain the campaign itself. And then came Swachh Badi - the learning centre for SWM. Modelled after our own shining example back in Bangalore—SwachaGraha Kalika Kendra (SGKK), this is where learning happens in an aesthetic setting studded with sustainable, yet practical solutions. Swachh Badi has appeared in the Intermediate State Board textbooks reiterating the importance of its existence.

I am grateful to every single individual, official, ground support staff member who came forward, dirtied their hands and made the Clean Siddipet campaign a grand success. My heartfelt thanks to Minister Rao for giving me an opportunity to put my own SWM learning to good use. Last but not least, I am thankful to my SWMRT colleagues for their intellectual and moral support.



ALL SMILES: DR SHANTHI TUMMALA



“ The SWMRT team and its take on the Clean Siddipet project... ”



VANI MURTHY

When some super-amazing forces come together, a Siddipet happens. The dedicated efforts of committed people like Dr Shanthi have helped create a one-of-a-kind community that stands out as an example for the whole country.



SHEKAR PRABHAKAR

Community participation and political will together catalysed by the commitment of passionate SWM practitioners like Dr Shanti can make miracles happen in a short time.



DIVYA TIWARI

Prayers for a faster and wider emulation of the Siddipet model. I hope the whole state adopts it. This would be a great example of circular economy in action as the model emphasises reduce and reuse as well.

I've seen it with my own eyes the way sustainable menstruation (SM) is being mainstreamed in Siddipet. Diverse groups discuss it openly in public forums, not behind closed doors. Also, the key factor here is political will and active participation which is hard to come by.



PINKY CHANDRAN

In Siddipet, we can see how projects can be scaled up quickly when the govt takes ownership with right the guidance from SWM practitioners like Dr Shanthi. Consistent and making improvements, little by little.



ANURADHA GOVIND

A new definition for consultancy in SWM. Consultants should be driven by passion, not just with scientific designing and number crunching. It's always passion that drives the change. Dr Shanthi has demonstrated it time and again.

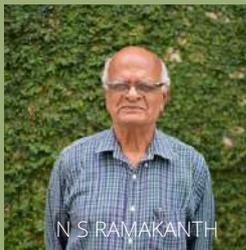


NALINI SHEKAR



SHALINI K CHARLES

Siddipet model is a prime example which showcases how important it is to work closely with dedicated politicians to make things happen on the ground. Dr Shanthi has shown us a way to showcase all our learnings on the ground.



N S RAMAKANTH

"Our waste is our responsibility", "Think before you throw", have always been our main sutras in ensuring proper solid waste management. When administrators and politicians cooperate, such wonders can happen.



SAVITA HIREMATH

In India, it's not easy to institutionalise civic responsibility. Yet, Siddipet did it because the campaign transformed the whole exercise from a mere habit into an ethic by instilling a collective sense of individual responsibility. Dr Shanthi did a great job!

My observation of the progress in Siddipet since the beginning is this: the project has demonstrated how to attain excellent public health with sustainable development.



Dr UMASHANKAR

To mainstream sustainable menstruation, I have worked along with Dr Shanthi in Siddipet where we used our knowledge and talent effectively. The minister has led Siddipet in a dynamic, systematic way and I think his constituency will be a model for all of us.



Dr MEENAKSHI B.

Siddipet stands out as a great example for all that's possible when intent and action come together. It would be nice to see it replicated elsewhere.



WILMA RODRIGUES



MONIKA K GULATI

Siddipet has showed how a focused leadership & vision can be so transformational by collaborating with those who have their feet on the ground, cutting out red-tapism and percolating ideas to the residents! What a marvellous example for the rest of the country.



SOWMYA RAGHAVAN

Siddipet is a proof that positive change is possible if the government and citizens are brought to work together by catalysts of change such as Dr Shanthi.



MALINI PARMAR

It's one thing to do it as an activist but quite another to see it being adopted on a mass scale. We at SWMRT can make it happen! I think we are behaviour-change specialists. Proper documentation will help more people adopt and replicate.



IT'S HISTORY IN THE MAKING...

By Sandya Narayanan

When the road to a desired destination is as fascinating as the destination itself, then excitement hitches a ride and cruises along without us realising it.

Our destination: Siddipet, Telangana. Our mission: To see through our own eyes the transformation the city has undergone in SWM over the last three years.

Although we were well aware of the winds of change that would often waft out of this small city and reach us back in Bangalore like a breath of fresh air, what we saw was beyond the realm of our imagination. Incidentally, our visit on February 18-19 coincided with the third anniversary of the Clean Siddipet Project which started in February 2020.

But first, the road. Yes! The drive to Siddipet from Hyderabad traversed like a fluffy dream. The eight-lane highway—I would rather call it a runway (to SWM success)—almost reached Siddipet, a distance of 103 kms from Hyderabad. The medians maintained beautifully with rock sculptures lit up and low-volume traffic made the journey that much more memorable.

It was a Shivrathri weekend in Siddipet. It took us no time to soak ourselves in the festive fervour as we were greeted by the hustle-bustle of vendors selling colourful flowers and fragrant mango leaves to customers on the roadsides.

Amidst all this, what did not go unnoticed was the absence of plastic carry bags as people were carrying their own. The footpaths and roads were amazingly clean. The impact of the “no-plastic-no-litter” campaign was palpable. The scene was no different when we revisited the spot in the evening.

During our two-day visit, we had the privilege of being driven around by Venkat, a resident of Siddipet and plastic engineering diploma dropout. He was curious to see his hometown's transformation through our eyes. Sanitation Officer Madhavi, a committed worker, patiently answered our barrage of questions on various aspects of SWM.

Similarly, we also had with us Nagaraj who started his SWM journey when Swachha Badi was set up and has remained committed to the cause since. However, he did get 'scolded' for buying chips sold in a plastic packet and for not disposing it of in the right place. Dr Shanthi refers to him as her younger brother. He insisted on getting us onto an exciting speedboat ride in the Komati Cheruvu-Ruby Necklace recreation park. He, along with another councillor Riyaz, spent the evening walking us through the sights and sounds of the amazing recreation park created in 2021.

One of the striking features of the park was popcorn being served in a single-layer brown cover! Needless to say, it turned out to be our guilt-free snacking time. We walked to piped music on beautifully designed and lit waterfront walkways which were either well-paved or had soft-impact walking tracks. The place was teeming with people. And guess what, absolutely clean! No littering whatsoever!

Siddipet is fortunate to have an adventure park which we could not visit. The aesthetically built and maintained Ranga Nayak Sagar dam is another mammoth project which acts as the main catchment area. Siddipet was earlier a drought-prone area but it is now surrounded by lush rice and corn fields, thanks to the dam.

Another feature that awed us no end was the dust-free air as all the footpaths were paved with interlocking tiles. All the trees had their trunks colourfully painted and the base protected with a painted cement ring which prevented the soil from escaping into the air. The clean roads had all the medians and turnarounds landscaped. The walls were adorned with beautiful art.

The undeniable impact of scientific, holistic and thoughtful SWM could be felt everywhere. Some effects were obvious to the naked eye while others carried the underpinnings which even untrained eyes could easily catch. They were being wafted from Siddipet's committed think tank, carried through people's hearts and souls to finally settle between the narrow streets and alleys and wide roads.

In other words, what we witnessed was history in the making.

(L to R): SWMRT members Vasuki Iyengar, Sandya Narayanan, Dr Shanthi Tummala, Siddipet Sanitation Officer Madhavi and Anuradha Govind during their visit to Siddipet in February 2023.

