

Teeja Devi -Swami Basti, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Teeja, is 60 years of age and lives in a family of five which includes herself, her husband and three sons. All the five family members stay in one room with a tin roof. The space outside the room is utilized for cooking food using a brick stove. Water is stored in one container and the same is used for drinking, bathing and other household chores. There is no electricity and water connection in the house. The family borrows water from the neighbors as there is no tap or hand pump near their house.

The toilet is dilapidated and the seat is broken. Teeja's family has constructed a temporary roof using bricks but fear that it may collapse anytime while using the toilet. The family members shared that it is very inconvenient to use it.



Teeja's Household and the condition of IHHL in her house, Swami Basti.

Speaking about the odds she faces, Teeja said:

“I live with my family of four, three sons and my husband. My two sons are heavy drinkers and have become alcohol dependent and do nothing for the family. My third son and husband are both mentally challenged. I have to spend considerable amount of my time looking look after them. There is no water connection in my house. Since I have to go to work in the morning and return in the evening, my mentally challenged son fills water from the nearby tap. Sometime he fetches the water but often he does not do it and I cannot say anything to him given his condition. I have not received my old age pension since the past 13 months because I do not have proper documents and cannot pay to get them made. I feel helpless and vulnerable living with two persons with disability. No one has ever approached me or attempted to help me including the local leaders or elected representatives...”

Breaking the denial and raising glimmer of hope

The newly formed Community Management Committee has taken up the issue. They have not only helped to break the denial of the local authorities but have got an assurance from the Commissioner, Head of the Municipal Corporation that their two applications seeking proper renovation of the Community Toilet Complex will be responded to immediately.

In fact, learning about the situation of the households with no toilets and the pathetic condition of the Community Toilet Complex in the settlement, Mr. Manoj Goswami, Chief Executive Engineer and Mr. N.K Agarwal, Executive Engineer and, Jaipur Municipal Corporation, decided to renovate the community toilet and ensure western seats for elderly and persons with disability, with proper supply of water and electricity.

Encouraged by the supportive attitude of the Jaipur Municipal Corporation, the Community Management Committee members are now hopeful that the Commissioner will strengthen WASH services in the settlement.