

Mind their manners!

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After trying to improve the transportation network in Mumbai, MMRDA plans to give grooming lessons to Project Affected People, mostly slum-dwellers who've been provided alternate accommodation in multi-storied buildings.

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Authority (MMRDA) had given each project affected family 225 sq feet flat at various rehabilitation sites. Since most of these families are residents of slums, it has become difficult for them to adjust in flat type accommodation. MMRDA has now appointed Environment Resources Management (ERM), UK based consultants, to educate and inculcate habits to help the residents to improve their hygiene and quality of life in their new surroundings.

Apart from this, the MMRDA has also appointed post-resettlement agents, to take care of the needs of the PAP. Milind Mhaiskar, Project Director, MUTP said, "The agents will be responsible for capacity building, which is required to maintain the assets, payment of electricity bill and formation of co-operative of society."

The ERM consultants have been appointed for a period of one year. Initially, the consultant will choose one rehabilitation site, to implement their concepts, as a pilot project. "We are striving to bring about behavioural changes. MMRDA does not want these buildings to become vertical slums," explained Mhaiskar

MMRDA has rehabilitated 20,000 people affected by Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) in 15-resettlement sites. Says Mhaiskar, "This project will also be replicated for projects like the airport rehabilitation project, in which 90,000 residents are to be relocated. Likewise, 15,000 residents affected by Mumbai Urban Improvement Project (MUIP) will also benefit if the concept proves successful".

Before implementing the concept, the consultants are going to carry out the study and survey of the rehabilitation sites. Says R Shanmugam, Principal Consultant, ERM, "We are going to involve NGOs and ALMs in our efforts. The main problem affecting the residents is the disposal of waste, for which we'll be taking the BMC's help."

There are also instances of walls and staircases having pan stains because of spitting, improper usage of bathrooms and sinks, misuse of elevators and choked drains. Most have not even made efforts to form a cooperative housing society. To achieve desirable success, they are working on a new concept called IEC, which stands for Information, Education and Communication. It'll include local groups like Mahila Mandal to educate and Advance Locality Managements (ALMs) to make presentations at these sites. "The residents can learn segregation of dry and wet waste. We can even help them composting the waste," says Shanmugam.

Mhaiskar said, "We will be evaluating the results of each rehabilitation sites after some months. The evaluation, which is called Impact Assessment Analysis, will be carried by **Tata Institute of Social Sciences.**"