Case study

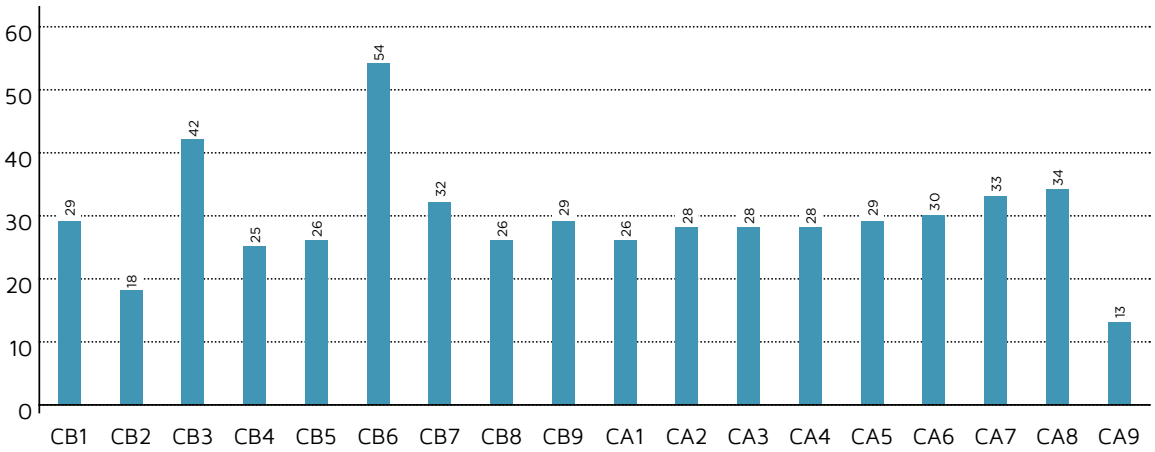
Social Mapping in Ramgati: Findings in a Nutshell

Overview

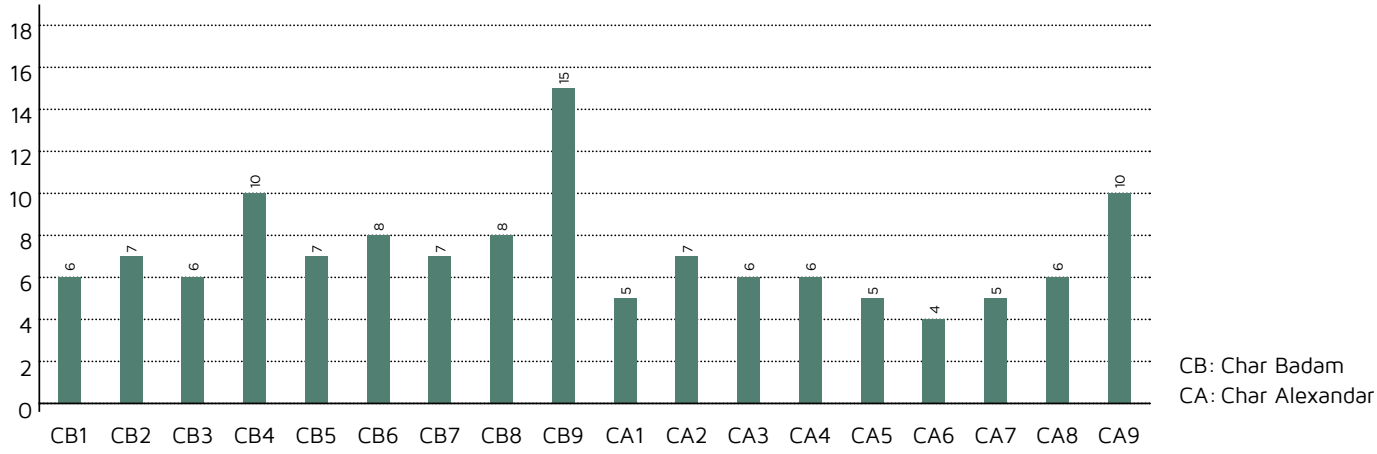
The Watershed programme is a coalition of national and local CSOs that aims to empower citizens to raise their voice so as to ensure that water and sanitation services are sustainable and reach everyone. As part of the empowering strategy of the Watershed programme in Bangladesh, capacity building of communities was undertaken to enhance its understanding of the situation on the ground so as to enable them to carry out their own sustainability monitoring. As a part of that, social mapping exercise by the community members was introduced in two unions (Veduria and Dhania) of Bhola Sadar in late 2019. With the expansion of the Watershed programme to another sub district in the same region - Ramgati – the exercise was initiated in two additional unions: Char Alexandar and Char Badam. This document illustrates the key findings gathered from the social mapping of the 18 wards of Char Alexandar and Char Badam.

Key Findings

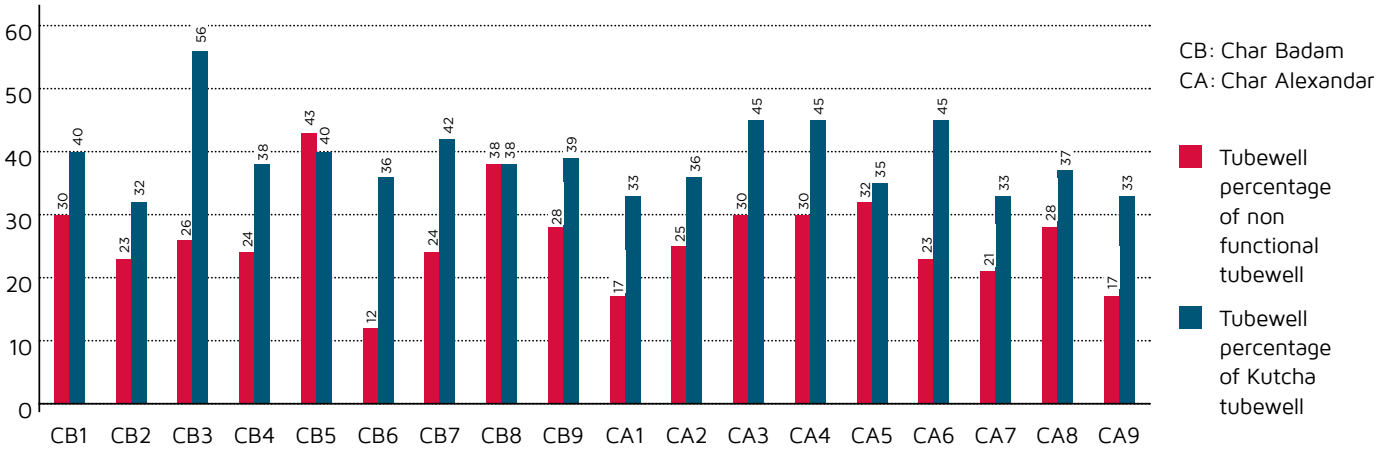
It can be seen from the bar diagram given below that percentage of hygienic latrine is quite low in the eighteen wards of these two unions. The average percentage of hygienic latrine is 29%. Among the eighteen, only six wards have coverage of hygienic latrine more than 30%. They are Char Badam ward 3, 6, 7 and Char Alexandar ward 6, 7, 8. On the contrary two wards have significantly low coverage. These two are Char Badam Ward 2 and Char Alexandar Ward 9 and the coverage percentage are 18 and 13 respectively. Of course the question is 'what is the perception of the community members about hygienic latrine'. From the interview of the community members, it is found that they consider a latrine hygienic if it has water seal, superstructure and visible cleanliness.



Percentage of hygienic latrine



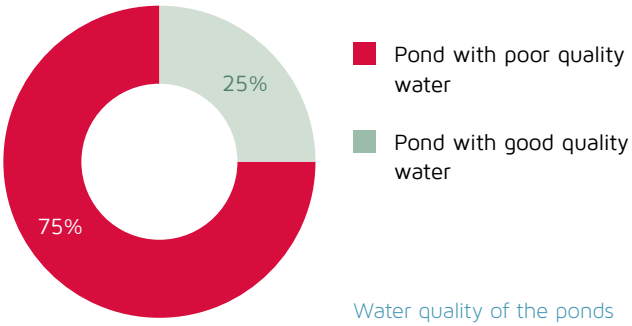
Percentage of open latrine



Percentage of tubewells

Looking at social maps of the individual wards offered the scope to understand the situation better. For instance, the unhygienic latrines can be divided into three categories. One is shared latrine which is visibly basic in nature (according to JMP definition) but shared by two or more households. Second category is latrines with broken water seal and lack of cleanliness. The third category is open latrines which are close to hanging latrines sometimes with no superstructure. The table below shows the percentage of this category of latrines in those wards. They can be considered as open defecation. Three wards have more than 10% of such. They are Char Badam Ward 4, 9 and Char Alexandar Ward 9. Strong lobby and advocacy is needed for resource allocation to these households. For the rest of the households with unhygienic latrines, awareness is more important.

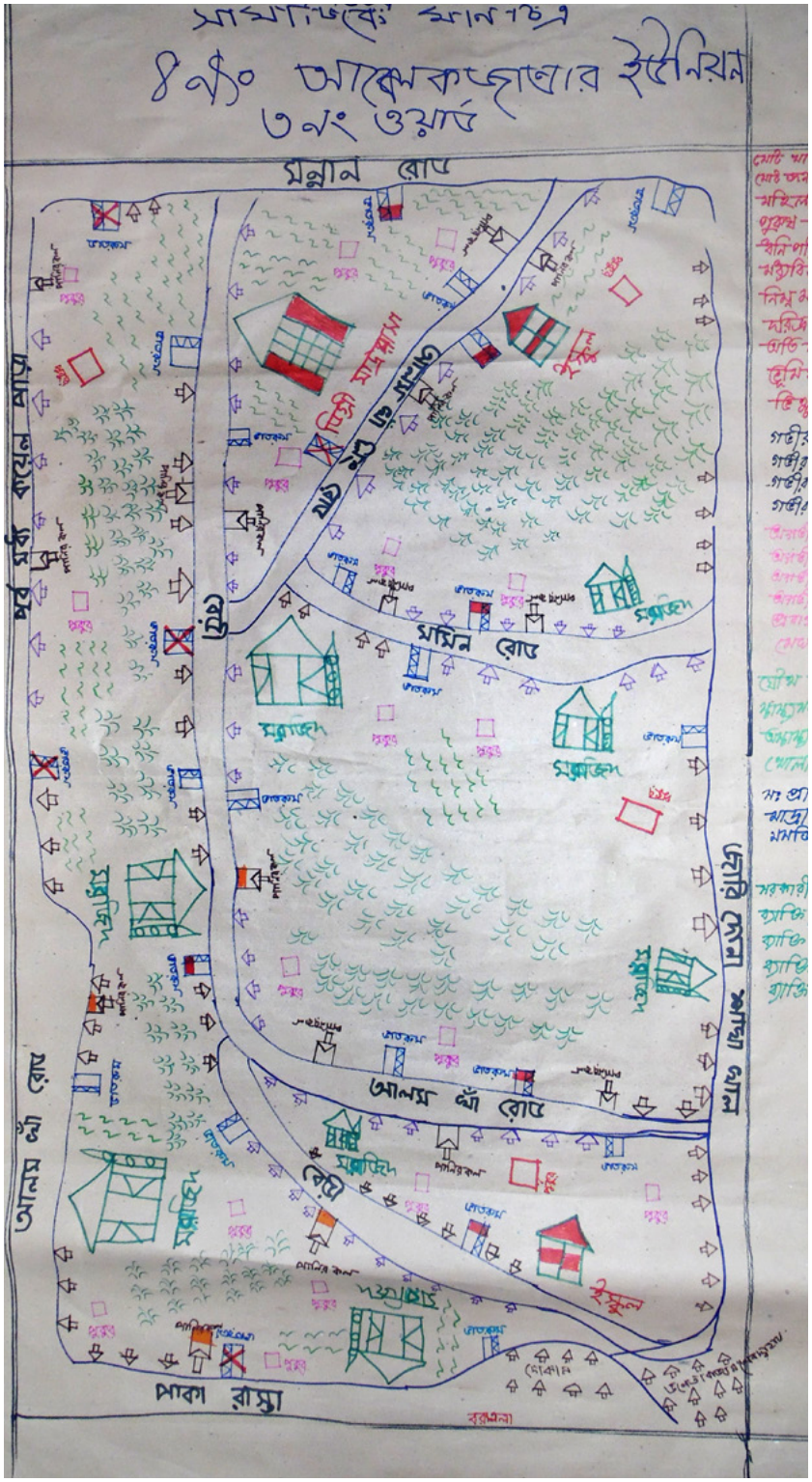
Let's look at the water quality. The wards of these two unions have 130 ponds in average. These ponds can be alternative source of water specially for greywater purposes. However, the community members discussed



Water quality of the ponds

about the quality of these ponds and found that only 25% of the ponds have good quality water. Rest are not properly managed and contains poor quality water. Here comes the role of knowledge dissemination on water security which can lead to proper management of these ponds for better IWRM and WASH.

Groundwater is the primary source of drinking water in these two unions. It mainly comes from the shallow aquifer. Only a handful of deep tubewells are there. Rest are shallow tubewells. In the eighteen wards it is found



Social map of ward 3, Char Alexandar Union

from the maps that 1 functional tubewell is there for every 21 households. So clear need for more tubewells is there. The social maps point out the locations of the tubewells thus areas with less tubewells can be located from the maps for future allocations. However the number of non-functional tubewells and tubewells with kutcha or no platform are also a concern. 26% of the total number of tubewells in those wards is non-functional. And 39% of the total number of tubewells has kutcha or no platform which has serious quality implications.

Conclusion

Monitoring using a social map is an excellent way for CSOs and community members to take stock of current water and sanitation services, the location and condition of marginalised groups, and to keep track of progress being made. A social map can help to improve decision making for better planning of water and sanitation interventions.

The findings gathered from the social maps revealed the need for more resource allocation, maintenance quality and awareness generation. Aggregated data sometimes lead to wide of the mark decisions. So it is required to look at individual maps to get disaggregated data. This can help to explore the nature of WASH and IWRM in those areas. It can also reveal important factors for lobby & advocacy, resource mobilization and awareness generation for better WASH services.