

Bringing Behavioural Change - Swachh Bharat Mission

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), despite its intent, is less encouraging in terms of the outcome achieved so far.

\n

- In this context, it is imperative to acknowledge the behavioural component in the implementation of the programme.

\n

\n\n

What are the complexities?

\n\n

\n

- Under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), the two complex challenges are:

\n

\n\n

\n

- i. changing behaviour by getting people to use toilets and stop defecating in the open

\n

- ii. sustaining the changed behaviour over time

\n

\n\n

\n

- These challenges transforms SBM from an infrastructure-focused “toilet construction” programme to a more complex behaviour change social revolution.

\n

- Moreover, the SBM “market” is more complex, where there is no intrinsic demand for “goods” (toilets).

\n

- It is hampered by the deeply ingrained habit of open defecation and the cultural norm of not having a toilet near one’s residence.

\n

\n\n

What are the key challenges?

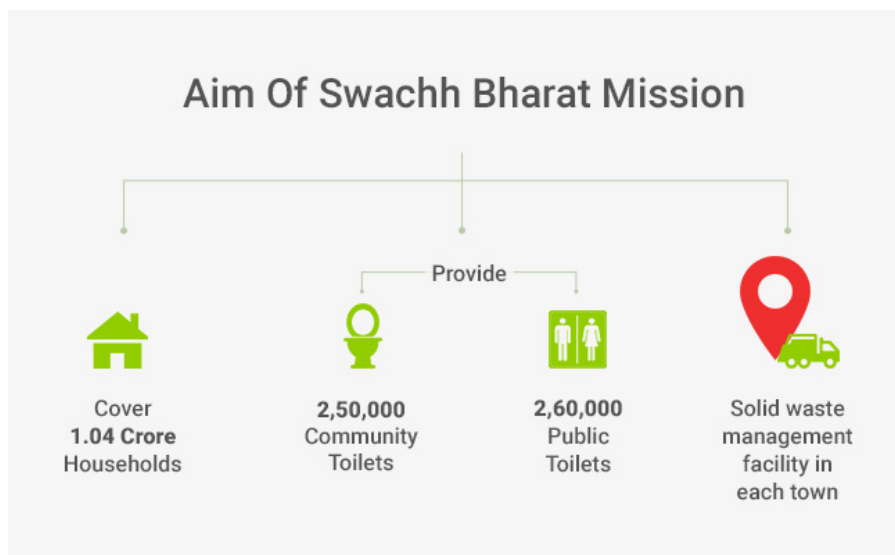
\n\n

\n

- **Scale** - The task at the start of the SBM in October 2014 was changing the behaviour of 550 million people living in rural India.
- **Speed** - The programme had to be implemented in 5 years.
- **Stigma** - The centuries-old taboos needed to be challenged. E.g. it was considered impure to have a toilet inside or near the home
- **Sustainability** - There was a huge task of having to make the recently changed behaviour stick, as sustaining it was more difficult than achieving it.
- Despite these, there was little prior experience of doing all this, which made learning hard and the degree of difficulty more severe.
- It literally took a village, peer pressure and whole-hearted community participation to make a village ODF (open defecation free).

\n

\n\n



\n\n

What should be done?

\n\n

\n

- Demand for a toilet had to be stimulated to wean people away from the habit of open defecation.

\n

\n\n

\n

- From the supply side, the programme needed to provide both toilets as well as a behaviour programme at scale for changing preferences.

\n

- There is a need for having systems and incentives in place for sustaining the behaviour change achieved.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: The Indian Express

\n

