

Fate of Rural Sanitation Scheme

Shashikant Nishant Sharma

Keywords

National Sanitation Schemes, Total Sanitation Scheme, Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, Rural Sanitation, Healthy Living condition

For Reference

Sharma, Shashikant Nishant (2014), The Fate of Rural Sanitation Scheme, *International Journal of Research (IJR)*, Vol-1, Issue-2

Abstract

This paper is a study of the Total Sanitation Campaign which sought to ensure open defecation free India by 2012. The campaign has been renamed as Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan in the 12th Five Year Plan. The study tries to see to what extent the campaign has been able to achieve its objects and whether the claims of some of the states to attain 100 percent open defecation free status are true or mis-represented. The major finding of this paper is that it shows how the claim of the open defecation free status is erroneous. The paper has been analytical and come out with some of the findings and suggestions which will be of great help to the policy planners and other people or agencies involved in the field of planning and management of schemes for development.

Introduction

Scope of Study

India is a country of diversity and this diversity can be seen in every walk of life. Here we will discuss about a very ambitious scheme of government of India to make village open-defecation free. Here in this article we will discuss and analyse the scheme and how and to what extent this has been successful or failed to achieve the expected target. We will also look into the case of a district and analyse the facts and figures of the achievements of the schemes. So, if we have to define the scope of this paper then it will be better to keep the study more focused and analytical so that some substantive results might come out. The main points that we are going to discuss in this paper are as follows:

- What is this scheme called Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan (NBA) or Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)?
- Is this scheme a holistic one to take care of rural sanitation?
- Has this scheme been success to achieve the expected targets and if failed why?
- Finally, analysis and recommendation for curative measures, which can be

inducted in this scheme or the subsequent sanitation scheme.

Background Studies

Encouraged by the success of Nirmal Gram Puraskar (given to Panchayat for attaining open-defecation free status), the TSC got renamed as NBA. NBA is a centrally sponsored and community-led sanitation program, which was formally started in year 1999 by Government of India. One of the key features of this scheme is that it is a demand-driven campaign. The main aim of this programme is the complete eradication of prevalence of open defecation from rural areas by 2022 (Government of India, 1999). One thing can be noted that this scheme is not focussed on creating infrastructure, but it intends to bring about a change in the cultural norms and awareness to adopt sanitation measures to prevent open defecation.

It is not surprising that the personal health and hygiene is dependent on the healthy environment of the area or community. The government realised this after running many programmes and schemes target to ensure sanitation in individual houses like Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP) in 1986. The holistic and integrated approach for planning and execution of the sanitation programmes was felt when the CRSP failed to ensured desired outcomes during its implementation phase. Although the aim of the scheme was to bring about an

improvement in the quality of life of the rural people, this scheme did little to ensure this. "Despite considerable investment, this approach failed to motivate and sustain high levels of sanitation coverage as it was based on the erroneous assumption that provision of sanitary facilities would lead to increased coverage and usage" (Mandal, 2008).

Many studies has been conducted and a good number of them show us a brighter side of the picture like Benny Gourage has written that Maharashtra state claims that 2000 Gram Panchayats are attained "open defecation free" status. Many villages have received the Nirmal Gram Puraskar, which is aimed at promoting and popularising the scheme among the local bodies so that they take a proactive role (George, April 2009).

One thing that need our due attention is the understanding the basic difference between NBA and TSC. The programme objects are almost same but what we need to keep in mind is that the revised approach or scheme will lay more emphasized on sharing information, technical know-how, education and communication regarding sanitation measures and act as a stimulating factor to boost demand driven vehicle of change. This scheme will also ensure that the people's enhanced capacity to opt for better sanitation measures will be taken care (Government of India, 1999).

Findings and Discussions

Objects of the Scheme

The main objectives of the NBA as stated in the programme document namely 'Guidelines-Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan' provided by Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation are as mentioned below:-

- Bringing about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural areas.
- Accelerating sanitation coverage in rural areas to provide access to toilets to all by 2012.
- Motivating communities and Panchayati Raj Institutions promoting
- Sustainable sanitation facilities through awareness creation and health education.
- In rural areas, providing schools by March 2013 and Anganwadis by March 2013, with sanitation facilities and promote hygiene education and sanitary habits among students.

- Encouraging cost-effective and appropriate technologies for ecologically
- Safe and sustainable sanitation.
- Developing community-managed environmental sanitation systems focusing on solid & liquid waste management.

When looked at the objectives of the scheme, it can be seen that this scheme has an integrated approach. The first object of

the scheme seeks to streamline the allied rural development schemes. The second objects seem to be more optimistic as even after 12-13 year the scheme has not be able to ensure total sanitation in many parts of the country.

Table 1: Achievements of the TSC (Planning Commission of India, 2013)

Strata	Performance	States
Very Good	75%-100%	Sikkim (100%), Kerala (95.4%), Haryana (86.6%), West Bengal (83.5%), Tamil Nadu (76.4%)
Good	50%-75%	Manipur (70.5%), Gujarat (68.6%), Assam (62.1%), Uttar Pradesh (60.02%), Punjab (60%), Andhra Pradesh (59%), Maharashtra (58.3%), Uttarakhand (54%), Meghalaya (51.7%)
Average	25%-50%	Madhya Pradesh (48.9%), Karnataka (42.1%), Rajasthan (38.4%), Orissa (35.6%), Jharkhand (27.7%)
Poor	0%-25%	Bihar (23.4%)

Table 2: PERCENTAGE-WISE ACHIEVEMENT AGAINST CENSUS 2001 TOTAL HOUSEHOLD

PERCENTAGE-WISE ACHIEVEMENT AGAINST CENSUS 2001 TOTAL HOUSEHOLD						
SL. No	State Name	Total HH	House hold With Toilet	House hold Without Toilet	% of Ach.(at Census 2001)	2012-2013 (in %)
1	A & N Islands	49653	21018	28635	42.33	42.33
2	Andhra Pradesh	12676218	2300695	10375523	18.15	87.15
3	Arunachal Pradesh	164501	77871	86630	47.34	100.00
4	Assam	4220173	2513804	1706369	59.57	100.00
5	Bihar	12660007	1761591	10898416	13.91	53.85
6	Chandigarh	21302	14598	6704	68.53	68.53
7	Chhattisgarh	3359078	173994	3185084	5.18	64.59
8	D & N Haveli	32783	5679	27104	17.32	17.44
9	Daman & Diu	22091	7074	15017	32.02	32.02
10	Delhi	169528	106608	62920	62.89	62.89
11	Goa	140755	67863	72892	48.21	72.76
12	Gujarat	5885961	1274523	4611438	21.65	100.00
13	Haryana	2454463	703513	1750950	28.66	100.00
14	Himachal Pradesh	1097520	304202	793318	27.72	100.00
15	Jammu & Kashmir	1161357	485434	675923	41.8	85.11
16	Jharkhand	3802412	249792	3552620	6.57	50.1
17	Karnataka	6675173	1161259	5513914	17.4	84.88
18	Kerala	4942550	4020021	922529	81.33	100
19	Lakshadweep	5351	4984	367	93.14	93.14
20	Madhya Pradesh	8124795	726218	7398577	8.94	100
21	Maharashtra	10993623	2001936	8991687	18.21	84.58
22	Manipur	296354	229662	66692	77.5	100.00
23	Meghalaya	329678	132199	197479	40.1	100.00
24	Mizoram	79362	63285	16077	79.74	100.00
25	Nagaland	265334	171525	93809	64.64	100.00
26	Orissa	6782879	523272	6259607	7.71	65.95
27	Puducherry	72199	15467	56732	21.42	24.56
28	Punjab	2775462	1135526	1639936	40.91	81.29
29	Rajasthan	7156703	1045385	6111318	14.61	77.37
30	Sikkim	91723	54438	37285	59.35	100.00
31	Tamil Nadu	8274790	1187919	7086871	14.36	100.00
32	Tripura	539680	420584	119096	77.93	100.00
33	Uttar Pradesh	20590074	3958570	16631504	19.23	100.00
34	Uttarakhand	1196157	377996	818161	31.6	100.00
35	West Bengal	11161870	3005854	8156016	26.93	100.00
	GRAND TOTAL :-	138271559	30304359	107967200	21.92	91.48

Source: Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, GOI

The scheme has sought to achieve open-defecation free Panchayat during the scheme period. But the data show that the scheme has been not fully successful but still we can see good achievement in the states like West Bengal, Uttrakhand, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim etc. who have been able to achieve 100 coverage of rural areas with toilet facility. The ridiculous thing in this data is that the achievement has been calculated based on the census data of the 2001 and not on the current of projected population, so we can say that the data in the table is not a true representation of the ground realities.

Motivation factor is working as we see that how the functionaries of Panchayats are working hard to get the monetary rewards of the 'Nirmal Gram Puraskar'. The validity of such claims need to be researched from actual site visit to such villages. From the Table 1: Achievements of the TSC, we find that there are still a long way to go for fulfilling the desired objectives of the scheme.

The scheme aimed at dissemination of technologies to the rural areas but we can find that the people and the government agencies are still using the traditional toilet facilities. There has been considerable research and innovation in the field of eco-toilets but the scheme has not been able to act as a facilitator for adoption and promotion of such techniques. Eco-Solutions has been actively innovating and promoting eco-toilets which are cost

effective and easy to install in rural areas and disaster prone areas (Eco-Solutions, 2007).

The scheme has not been able to integrate the solid waste management in the rural areas. "It is estimated that rural people in India are generating liquid waste (greywater) of the order of 15,000 to 18,000 million litres and solid waste (organic/recyclable) 0.3 to 0.4 million metric tons per day respectively" (UNICEF, 2013).

After analysing the objectives of the scheme, it is good to look into the mechanism of the schemes namely its strategies and implementation framework.

Strategies and Implementation

STRATEGY: -

The strategy adopted in scheme is directed to transform 'Slumming India'¹ into 'Nirmal Bharat' by adopting the 'community led' and 'people centered' strategies of sanitation and integrated rural development. This campaign sought to be a "demand driven approach" which is run and promoted by Government of India to lay due emphasis on awareness creation and demand generation for sanitary facilities in houses, schools and for cleaner environment. This scheme also seeks to use alternate delivery mechanisms to meet the community needs at an accelerated pace

¹ Slumming India: a chronicle of slums and their saviours by Gita Dewan Verma (Verma, 2002).

than what is going on. The scheme has also created provision of incentives for individual household latrine units to the below poverty line people (BPL) (Government of India, 1999). The most effective tool to make this campaign success is considered to be the use of information and communication technology (ICT). ICT will be used to disseminate required information and as a means to popularise the scheme to meet people demand. The use of ICT will also act as a bridge for Panchayati Raj Institutions, Co-operatives, ASHA, Anganwadi workers, Women Groups, Self Help Groups, and NGOs etc. (Government of India, 1999). From the table of the hierarchy of the work and responsibilities of different agencies as given in Figure 1: Sustaining the Sanitation Revolution, India Country., we can see that the scheme seeks to have a holistic approach for implementation strategies.

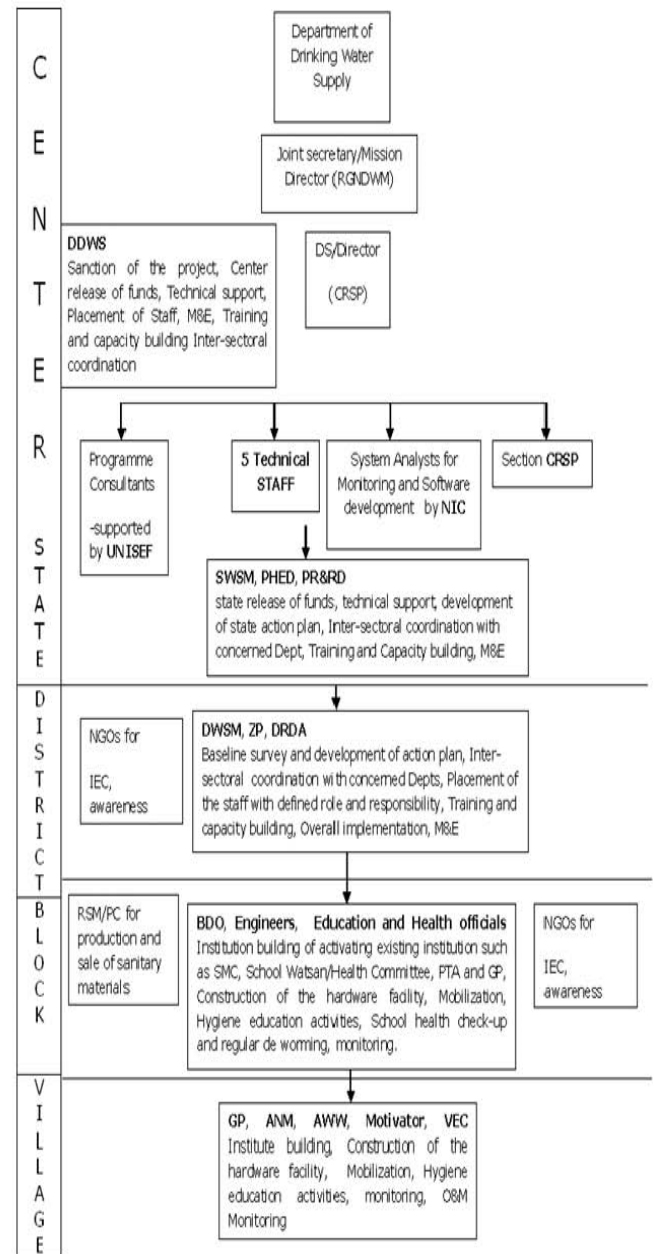


Figure 1: Sustaining the Sanitation Revolution, India Country (George, April 2009).

The scheme sought to be implemented in all states of India and we can see from the

IMPLEMENTATION: -

Table 2: PERCENTAGE-WISE ACHIEVEMENT AGAINST CENSUS 2001 TOTAL HOUSEHOLD that almost all states have implemented it and some have achieved remarkable progress in term of availing enhanced sanitation facilities and some are still scaling the ladders of the progress. The scheme is implemented at Panchayat level which is called base unit. The project proposals are put forth by district level authorities, which are scrutinized and consolidated by the State Government and transmitted to the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation as a State Plan (Government of India, 1999). The implementation mechanism is oriented towards meeting the felt-needs i.e., demand driven approach. The local implementation agency which is usually Gram Panchayats take active role in ensuring flexibility in opting for the sanitation schemes. One of the good thing is that the BPL families get a choice of subsequent improvement of the toilet facilities too. This scheme has provisions for ensuring dissemination of desired behavioural changes for relevant sanitary practices with participation of NGOs/Panchayati Raj Institutions/resource organizations (Government of India, 1999).

The TSC did not lay emphasis on solid and liquid waste management which is essential to ensure the achievement of the scheme. During the first 6 years of its implementation, TSC programme did not focus on Solid and Liquid Waste Management and it was included as

separate component only in 2006 (Planning Commission of India, 2013).

Many states have reported some issues regarding toilet- structures like roof, walls, doors as well as depth of the pit barring state of Karnataka, Kerala, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Haryana and Gujarat, households in most of the other states reported that there exist issues relating to. Only 59% households have toilets that are both covered on all sides and have a roof. The percentage ranges from only 12.3% in West Bengal to 99 % in Sikkim (Planning Commission of India, 2013).

As per the report of the Planning Commission of India, there are still ambiguity in the status accorded as Nirmal Gram as there are still 13.8 percent of the households that reported open defecation. This is really a cause of concern as these villages are those which have been announced open defecation free under the scheme.

Recommendations and Suggestions

There are many recommendable achievements of this scheme and we can see how new states are attaining the status of 100 percent open defecation Free State. We have seen how this data is erroneous and misleading in nature. The grand success

of 'Nirmal Gram Puraskar' is noteworthy besides other achievements of this scheme. However, there are always some scope for improvement in any schemes. From this study, some lessons can be drawn. To make this programme or subsequent programme more economically feasible, socially acceptable, environmentally sustainable and technically practicable, the following recommendations can be of some use:

Implementation Strategy

The critical analysis of the campaign popularly known as TSC shows that there is a need to relook at the process and strategies of programme implementation. There is need for greater transparency and social audit in the programme to make this more socially acceptable which can lead to societal changes and change in the perspective for sanitation facilities.

Delegated Responsibilities

There is need for proactive participation of a number of stakeholders like government agencies, civil society, local bodies, community based organisations, non-governmental organisations and the users of the facilities. The delegation of responsibility will ensure greater chance of success, acceptance and functioning of the campaign.

Close Monitoring To Measure Outcomes

There is a need to look into the monitoring mechanism of the campaign. There is no indicator for monitoring the level of social acceptance of the sanitation

measures especially in tribal areas. The improvement in sanitation must be integrated with the better health and living condition in the villages.

Increase Push Force

There are some states which are still lagging behind in the race of open defecation free and complete sanitation in rural areas. There has to be an increased incentive for making the lagging states achieve their target. The fund flow should be augmented along with alternative measures of finance. Periodic review of the fund utilisation must be done at different levels like States, District, Development Block and Panchayat.

Dedicated Staff

We find that there is no dedicated staff at the lower level i.e., at Panchayat level and even at higher stages there is shortage of dedicated staffs in different states. Now when the campaign is being revived under the name of Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan, is crucial to think over this.

Quality of Construction and Eco-Toilets

There has been substantial development in the area of toilet construction like innovation in the construction of eco-toilets and low cost toilets (Eco-Solutions, 2007). The good quality of the toilets will promote increased uses of the toilets. There has to be close

monitoring of the purchases and distribution of construction materials.

Role of Women

The need for the sanitation cannot be better handled by women folk. There is need for ensuring increased women participation in this campaign. Some women self-help groups should be entrusted with the responsibility of monitoring the functioning of the toilets constructed under the scheme.

Convergence with Other Schemes and Programmes

The nature of the campaign seek to ensure integrated approach to sanitation and this will be successful only when this programme is co-ordinated with other programmes like the rural drinking water, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, National Rural Health Mission, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act etc. Taking into account the objectives of the campaign, it is advisable to ensure convergence and coordination among different schemes at the local level.

Conclusions

On studying a lot of literature and having an on hand experience of the how this scheme is going on and being implemented, author felt the need to express his recommendations and suggestions for improvement of the scheme for effective implementation and substantial gains from this scheme for the

benefits of people of rural areas. It is also observed that TSC is an important programme that has, increased the reach of rural people to the sanitation facilities like increased coverage. It has been able to ensure better sanitation in the educational institutions in rural areas. The increased awareness and regularly updating of the achievements of the different levels of the administrative units on the national portal is a good example of proactive role of the government machinery. This not only reminds us of the achievements but also acts as a reminder for achieving the total sanitation target by different levels of the government. The stations having achieved 100 percent sanitation can stand proud in the line of success and can claim other benefits. In 2003 Government of India has added one new component "Nirmal Gram Puraskar" (NGP) to give fillip to the campaign (Planning Commission of India, 2013). The declaration of the 'NGP' is also playing an important role in motivating the elected local bodies of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

There is no clearly defined responsibilities of the different agencies which often leads to duplicity or overlap of responsibilities and many a time body may leave the responsibility on other's shoulder. A decade of the campaign and still we are waiting for the country as whole to become open defecation free. No doubt the coverage of the sanitation facilities in rural areas have gone up but still there is sign of

failure of the schemes as we see there is technical error in data presentation. The programme sought to get participation of government agencies, civil society, local bodies, community based organisations, non-governmental organisations and the users of the facilities (Planning Commission of India, 2013).

Even though there has been substantial improvement in the technology of the toilet construction like low cost toilets, eco-toilets but the campaign is still using and

promoting the traditional toilets. There is lack of monitoring of the procurement of the toilets construction materials. Better institutional machinery is necessary to ensure enhanced inter-departmental agencies coordination and different programmes integration to ensure integrated development of the rural area will go a long way in ensuring better tomorrow for people living in rural areas.

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About Author

Shashikant Nishant Sharma is a professionally qualified Urban Planner and Planning Consultant by profession. He has written since 2003 and he has scores of books published. His area of interest is diverse which you can see from his literary works. Poetry, lyrics, Ghazals, short stories and thoughtful essays on current affairs and urban planning issues are his area of deep interest and continued writing. Being brought up in a rural area, got educated in sub-urban area and now living in metropolitan city, Delhi, he has been able to gather many experiences on diverse fields especially on political, cultural, socioeconomic and environmental issues. His graduation in physical planning from School of Planning and Architecture (SPA, Delhi) added new dimensions to his thinking and writing. He is currently pursuing post-graduation from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Roorkee.

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