

RGICS



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# RGICS Issue Brief

(May 2, 2016)

## **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: An Analysis**

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## Swachh Bharat Abhiyan: An Analysis

### Swachh Bharat Abhiyan-An Analysis

The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has been portrayed as one of the key programs that is being pushed by the Prime Minister, but despite the publicity given to the Clean India Campaign and news reports highlighting the NDA government's efforts, the program implementation has been almost underwhelming. A look at the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan's mission objectives versus the performance tells us that while there has been a lot of hype around the program, on the ground the program has barely made a difference as far as key metrics like open defecation, number of functional toilets etc. are concerned, and India still represents 60 percent of the world's population who defecate in the open and continues to be short of 90 million rural toilets.<sup>1</sup>

### Mission Objectives

For Swachh Bharat Mission Urban<sup>1</sup>:

1. Elimination of Open Defecation
2. Modern and Scientific Municipal Solid Waste Management
3. Eradication of Manual Scavenging
4. To effect behavioural change regarding healthy sanitation practices
5. Generate awareness about sanitation and its linkage with public health
6. Capacity Augmentation for ULB's
7. To create an enabling environment for private sector participation in Capex (capital expenditure) and Opex (operation and maintenance)

For Swachh Bharat Mission Gramin<sup>2</sup>:

1. Bring about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural areas.
2. Accelerate sanitation coverage in rural areas to achieve the vision of Swachh Bharat by 2019 with all Gram Panchayats in the country attaining Nirmal status.
3. Encourage cost effective and appropriate technologies for ecologically safe and sustainable sanitation.
4. Motivate communities and Panchayati Raj Institutions promoting sustainable sanitation facilities through awareness creation and health education.
5. Develop community managed environmental sanitation systems focusing on solid & liquid waste management for overall cleanliness in the rural areas.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.telegraphindia.com/1160413/jsp/nation/story\\_79908.jsp#.VyHJ7PI97IU](http://www.telegraphindia.com/1160413/jsp/nation/story_79908.jsp#.VyHJ7PI97IU), accessed on 28.4.2016

<sup>2</sup> [http://sbm.gov.in/sbm\\_new/AboutSBM.aspx](http://sbm.gov.in/sbm_new/AboutSBM.aspx), accessed on 27.4.2016

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### Achievements of the Swachh Bharat Mission

The snapshot<sup>3</sup> (below) lists the progress of the Mission (urban). It can be inferred from the statistics quoted below that the best achievement under this program has been in the construction of toilets.<sup>4</sup>



The progress of the Swachh Bharat Mission- Gramin<sup>5</sup> is projected again in the number of toilets that have been constructed. But are these toilets in use or have they been abandoned is an answer that we cannot find in the achievements projected by this Mission.



<sup>3</sup> [http://swachhbharaturban.gov.in/RPT\\_DashBoard.aspx?id=c00b0004d25a9f22ba135c5c0bdcfb19](http://swachhbharaturban.gov.in/RPT_DashBoard.aspx?id=c00b0004d25a9f22ba135c5c0bdcfb19), accessed on 27.4.2016

<sup>4</sup> It will be shown further in the document that garbage collection, sewage treatment is unsatisfactory and identification of swachhta doots have not given the desired results.

<sup>5</sup> <http://sbm.gov.in/sbmdashboard/Default.aspx>, accessed on 27.4.2016

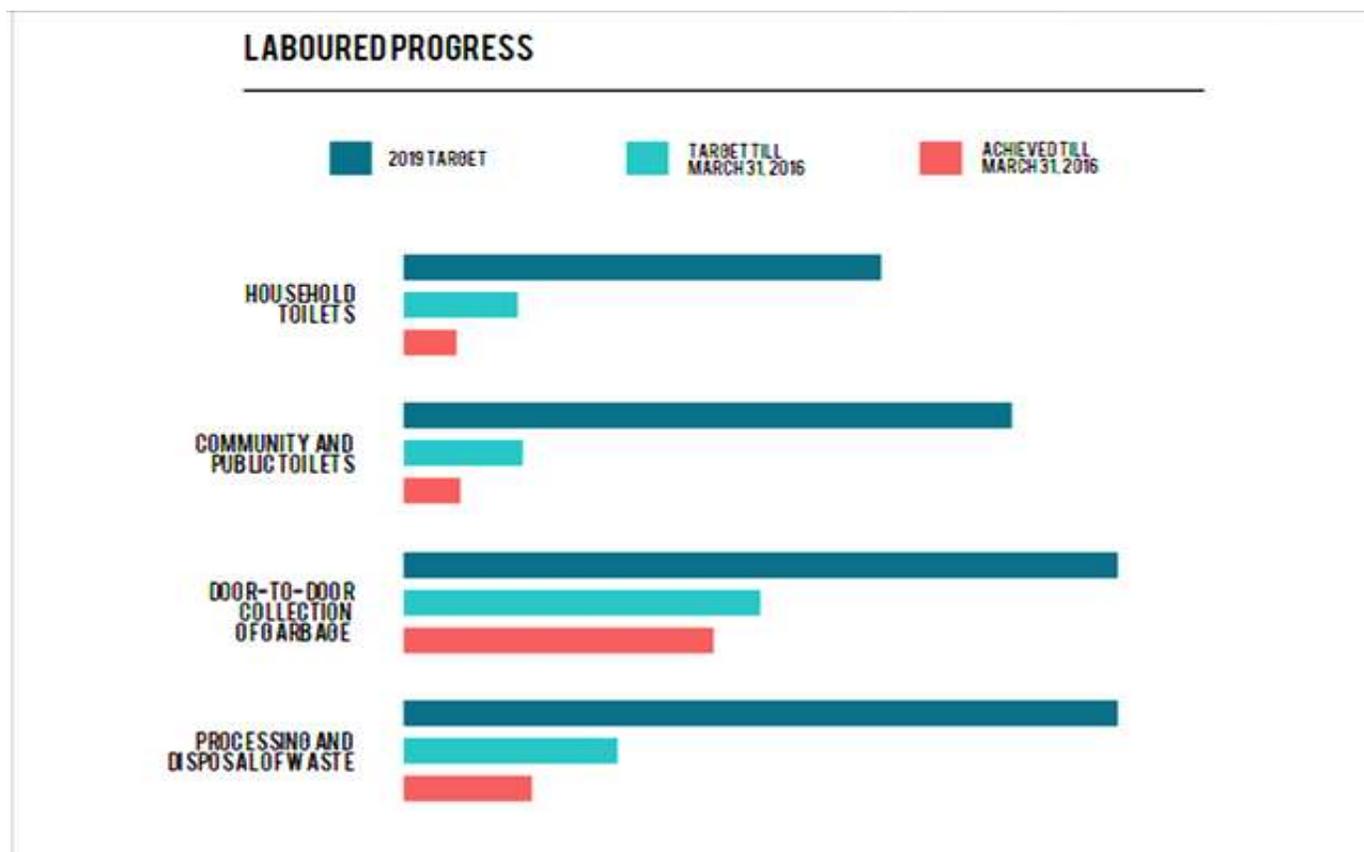
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### What the Swachh Bharat Mission Has Failed to Achieve

The increasing number of toilets constructions in urban as well as rural areas cannot be the standard by which the success of this mission can be assessed. Toilet construction does not translate into its usage or guarantee that sewage collected from them is disposed efficiently or that the evil of manual scavenging would begin to come under control.

The following graph, based on a rapid survey<sup>6</sup> depicts that the Modi government is way behind in achieving the targets it had set out for itself till March 2016.<sup>7</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Swachhta Status Report, 2016

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india/pm-modi-s-swachh-bharat-mission-floundering-in-urban-india/story-tvzzlwzWXk9gSOXnwTm8YK.html>, April 13, 2016. Accessed on 22.4.2016

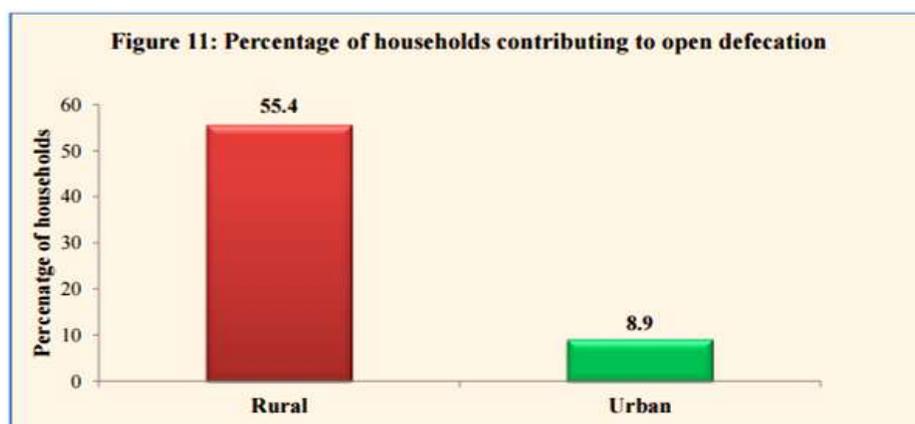
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After almost two years of its inception some of the glaring failures that this Mission suffers from are listed below.

### I. Open defecation continues

A very important aim of Swachh Bharat Mission has been to reduce the incidence of open defecation and this it aims to achieve by construction of toilets. The snapshots above highlight that a fairly large number of toilets have been constructed, however the results of the rapid survey conducted by NSSO<sup>8</sup> indicate that more than 50 percent of rural households still contribute to open defecation. Hence if we were to look at the trend of toilet construction by this government, it can be concluded that an **increase in toilet construction is not translating into reduction of open defecation.**



### II. Increased toilet construction does not mean reduced open defecation

Another case in point is Uttar Pradesh which has the highest number of open defecators. But it still has not seen a high number of toilet constructions (till March 2015) as compared to the figures at the national level. Thus, even though the national figures paint a successful picture of the linkages between toilet construction and reduction in open defecation, a close look at the statistics for individual states could indicate otherwise. The reason why at the national figures of the number of toilets constructed is sizeable is because only a few states such as Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Maharashtra that spent most of the available funds. Toilet construction spending in most large states with a large number of open defecators such as UP, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Madhya was much below target.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Swachhta Status Report, 2016

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.livemint.com/Opinion/b6XOmxBkTr5MtjvgMoGyH/Like-its-predecessors-Modis-sanitation-programme-is-strugg.html>,

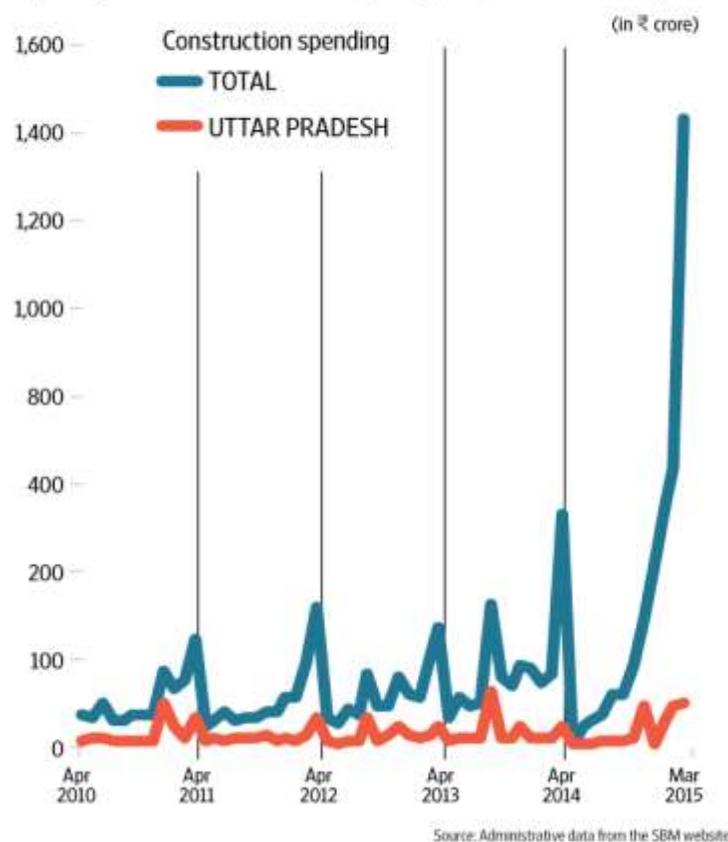
June 5, 2015. Accessed on 25.4.2016

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### TOILET CONSTRUCTION SPENDING

Spending on construction nationally has gone up in the last one year



## II. Lack of access of water in household toilets

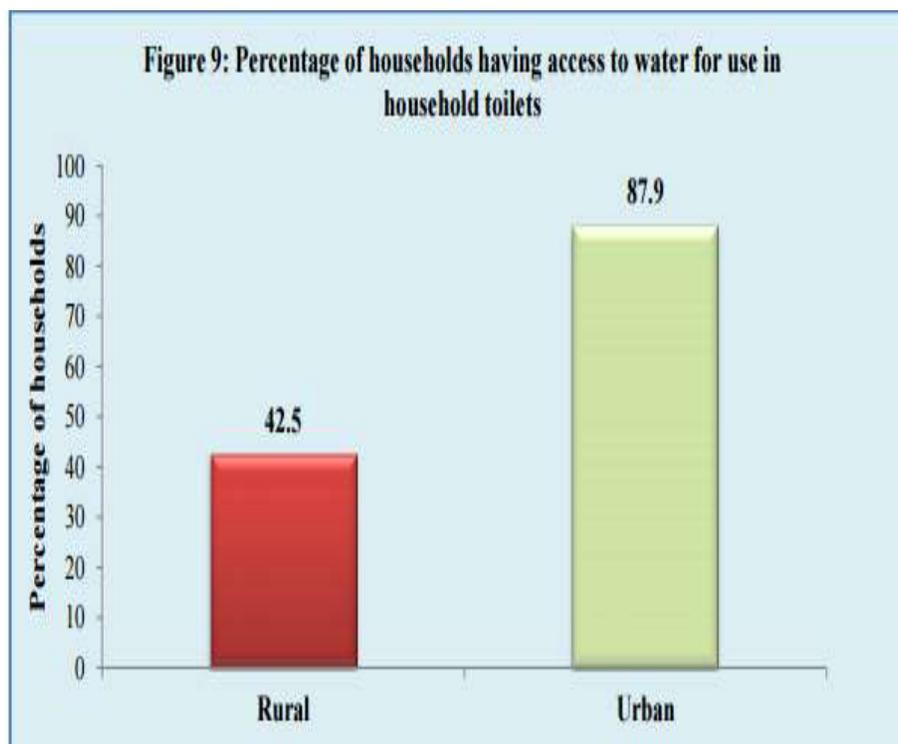
One important reason for open defecation is lack of access to water in household toilets. This reason has been accepted by the government as well-in response to a parliamentary question in March, the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation said “The main reason for open defecation is behaviour and mindset of the people who have continued the practice for centuries.” It also stated that adequate availability of water for toilets is also a concern.<sup>10</sup>

Under the Swachh Bharat Mission the government has performed dismally on being able to provide for water in household toilets. This is indicative of the fact that people would opt to defecate in places other than these toilets thereby not showing improvements in the number of open defecators.

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.thehindu.com/data/most-of-rural-india-still-opts-for-open-defecation-nss-report/article8503947.ece>, April 21, 2016.

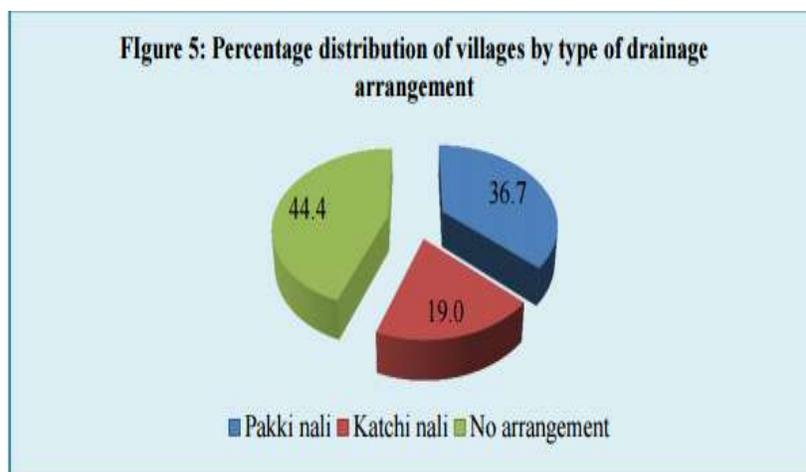
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#### IV. Lack of efficient waste management

Toilets are simply the receivers of waste and they need to be connected effectively for proper waste management. The figure below depicts that **44.4 percent of the rural households do not have any drainage arrangement**. Even if these households are provided with in house toilets due to lack of an effective means for drainage these toilets would be useless. As for the urban areas **only 36.8% wards in urban areas reported to have a proper liquid waste disposal system for community/public toilets**.



The ramifications of a lack of drainage arrangement are huge but even with arrangement for drainage it can be seen that **drainage water is being disposed in water bodies** like ponds, nalas and rivers leaving it to be a menace for the environment as well as the people who depend on these water bodies for water.

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Percentage distribution of villages by method of disposal of drainage water				
No arrangement	With arrangement			
	Pond	Nala	River	Any other source
44.4	15.8	24.0	6.8	9.0

Further this government has not been able to bring about an improvement in the solid waste management practices. **Only 18 percent of the total waste generated in the country is being processed.**<sup>11</sup>

Solid waste management as on 31.01.2016

Total no. Of wards	No. Of wards with 100 percent door to door collection	Total waste generation (metric tonnes/day)	Total waste processing (in percent)	Target to achieve waste processing by March 2016
78633	3459	147381	18	37

### V. Manual Scavenging has not seen any respite

One of the aims of Swachh Bharat Mission has been to reduce instance of manual scavenging but the data indicates that the largest ‘cleaning agency’ for toilets continues to be persons employed by the panchayat. **The panchayat government employs 54.9 percent people to clean community toilets, while 22.6 percent of the total community toilets are not being cleaned at all.**

Percentage distribution of villages by cleaning agency for community toilets			
Nobody	Employed by panchayat/ contract payment	Residents	Any other
22.6	54.9	17.0	5.5

In the urban areas as well the **largest cleaning agency is persons employed by the government accounting for 73.1 percent.**

Percentage distribution of wards by cleaning agency for community toilets			
Nobody	Employed by		Any other
	Residents' Welfare Association	Local Municipal Body	
8.6	12.2	73.1	6.1

As the government still continues to bank the most on employing humans for cleaning these toilets it is unlikely that under

<sup>11</sup> [http://mospi.nic.in/Mospi\\_New/upload/Swachhta\\_%20Status\\_Report2016.pdf](http://mospi.nic.in/Mospi_New/upload/Swachhta_%20Status_Report2016.pdf), accessed on 25.4.2016

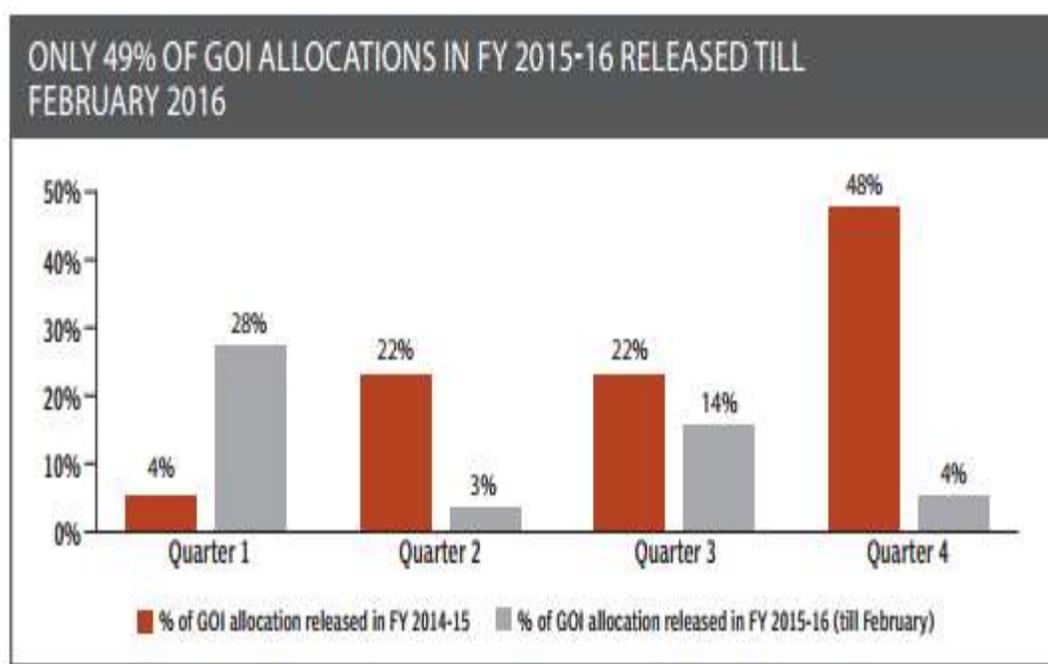
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the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan the manual scavengers can find any respite, thus defeating one of the very important goals of this initiative.

### VI. Slow release of funds

The budget for Swachh Bharat Mission is determined by negotiations between the Government of India and State Governments. The release of funds for the year 2015-16 has been low as compared to previous years. As is seen **only 49 percent of the funds had been sanctioned by the government.**<sup>12</sup>



Source: India Budget, Expenditure, Vol. 2. Available online at: <http://indiabudget.nic.in/vol2.asp> and include supplementary budgets passed. Releases are available on the SBM portal. Format C6, Sanction order issued by MODWS. Available online at: [http://sbm.gov.in/TSC/DataEntry/Sanc\\_OrderEntry/Rpt\\_Sanc\\_OrderDetails.aspx?id=Home](http://sbm.gov.in/TSC/DataEntry/Sanc_OrderEntry/Rpt_Sanc_OrderDetails.aspx?id=Home). Accessed on 25 February 2016.

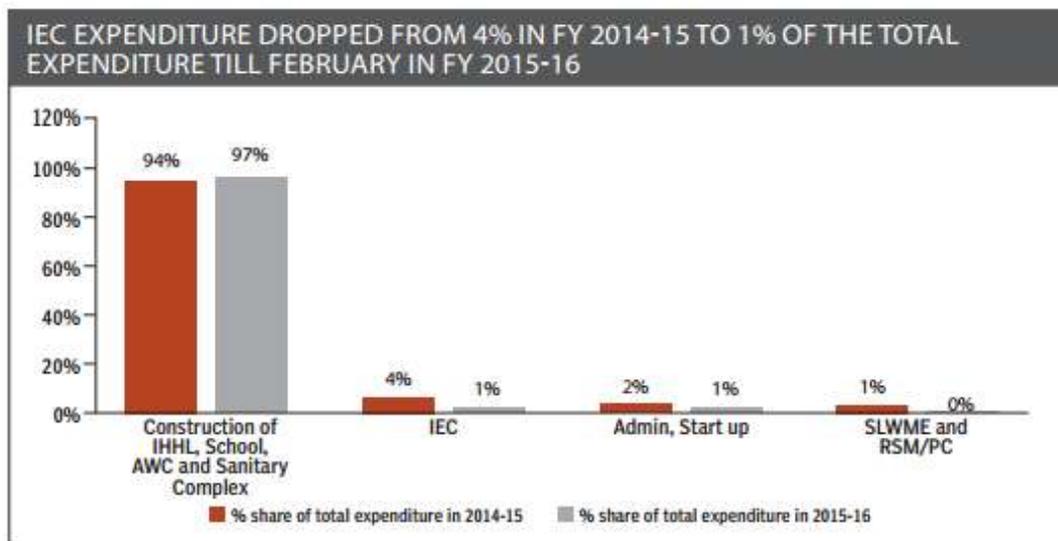
### VII. Less attention given to information, education and communication (IEC)

The following figure indicates the breakup of expenditure done under Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin). **It is clear that there is a lot of emphasis on construction of toilets while the percentage expenditure done on IEC activities in order to generate awareness among the people in rural areas has seen a dip from the already low 4 percent to 1 percent.**

<sup>12</sup> <http://cprindia.org/sites/default/files/policy-briefs/SBM.pdf>, accessed on 25.4.2016

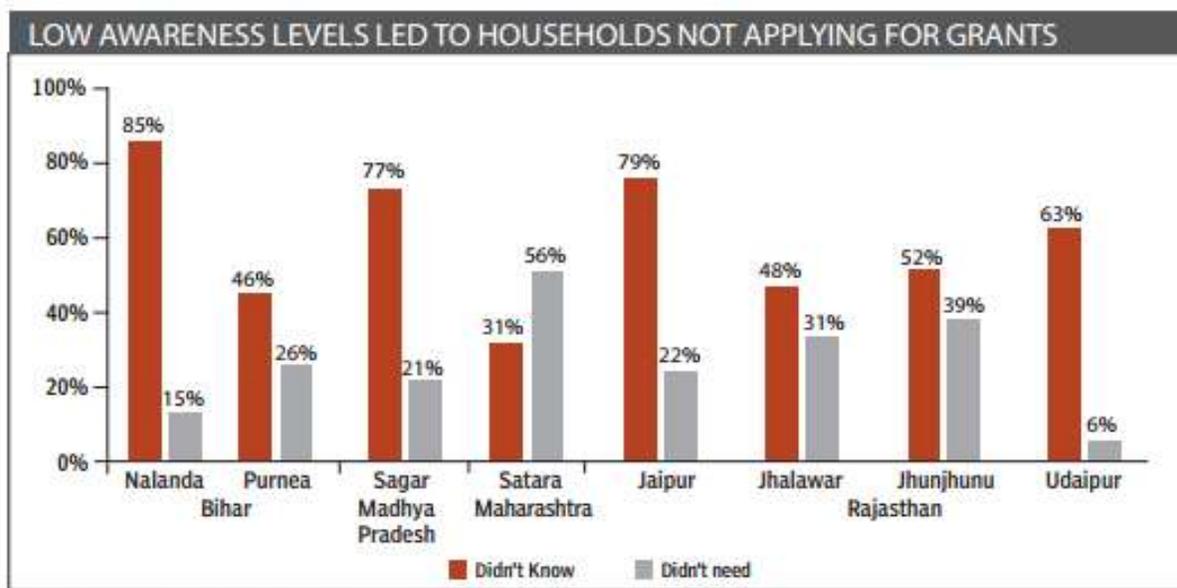
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Source: SBM portal. Format B2(b), Yearly component-wise expenditure. Available online at: <http://sbm.gov.in/TSC/Report/Financial/RptStateDistrictExpYearwise.aspx?id=Home>. Accessed on 24 February 2016.

The lack of emphasis on generating awareness among these rural households translates into them not realising the importance of using toilets. A survey conducted by Accountability Initiative on facility level expenditure tracking survey (PAISA survey) in December 2015 has found that low awareness caused rural households to not apply for grants for construction of toilets.<sup>13</sup>



Source: Accountability Initiative Fund Tracking Survey (PAISA), December 2015

<sup>13</sup> <http://cprindia.org/sites/default/files/policy-briefs/SBM.pdf>, accessed on 25.4.2016

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### What Needs to be Done

It is very plain that if the mission objectives of this program need to be achieved in substance and not just in theory, this government needs to expand its aim from achieving physical targets of toilet construction alone. Learning from the success of Bangladesh in becoming completely open defecation free can be a torch bearer on how the efforts of this government should be centred. An **absolute community mobilization** is what it took for this country to become defecation free. Through the collaboration of governmental and non-government organisations as well as the private sector a rapid change in the behavioural attitudes towards sanitation was brought about. Techniques like ‘**shame and disgust**’ **message campaigns** helped in accelerating the changing of social norms regarding open defecation. **Incentives** like identifying local leaders to be champions of sanitization who took responsibility of ensuring no open defecation; rewarding small companies that sold concrete for building of latrines added to bringing about this change.<sup>14</sup>

As this government agrees that “the main reason for open defecation is behaviour and mindset of the people who have continued the practice for centuries”<sup>15</sup> it fails to bring an overhaul in behavioural change of the masses with regard to sanitation. Has there been such a community mobilization in India surrounding the Swachh Bharat Mission? Despite the involvement of celebrities in bringing about awareness are we in a place to launch a full frontal attack on the problem of open defecation to start with? Looking at the paltry one percent funds allocated to IEC activities (as discussed above) it is not tough to guess that community mobilization is not the primary aim of this government.

In order to achieve the objectives of the Swachh Bharat Mission this government cannot assume a paternal figure and give handouts for toilet construction. They need to divest the responsibility of wanting a toilet on to the people by bringing about massive behavioural change in the attitudes of people.

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<sup>14</sup> <http://blogs.bmj.com/bmj/2014/09/23/jocalyn-clark-why-has-bangladesh-had-such-success-in-improving-sanitation-but-not-neighboring-india/>, accessed on 27.4.2016

<sup>15</sup> See FN 9