



TATA WATER
MISSION
A TATA TRUSTS INITIATIVE

ZILA SWACHH BHARAT PRERAK

India's new sanitation warriors



ABOUT TATA WATER MISSION

Tata Water Mission (TWM) is a programme initiated by Tata Trusts to tackle the water crisis with a multi-pronged approach. The three core areas supported by the programme are: technology innovations; improved service delivery through sustainable and integrated development, through water conservation and water supply; and behavioural change communication models. TWM targets to give better access to pure water to 6 million people in 7,000 villages across 12 states, within the next three years.

ABOUT TATA TRUSTS

Since inception in 1892, Tata Trusts, India's oldest philanthropy, has played a pioneering role in bringing about an enduring difference in the lives of the communities it serves. Guided by the principles and the vision of proactive philanthropy of its Founder, Jamsetji Tata, the Trusts' purpose is to catalyse development in the areas of healthcare and nutrition, water and sanitation, education, energy, rural upliftment, urban poverty alleviation, and arts, craft and culture. Tata Trusts' programmes, achieved through direct implementation, partnerships and grant making, are marked by innovations, relevant to the country.



**JANUARY
2017**

Tata Trusts
collaborates with
Swachh
Bharat Mission



405 (AS OF 2017)

Total number of
preraks deployed
in India



300

The number
of open defecation
free districts
till date*

FEATURED IN THIS ISSUE

Vibhore Maheshwari

Helped drive awareness and adoption of toilets
in Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh

Jeevan Roy

Ensured that the open defecation free targets for
Dharwad district were met successfully

Alok Arunam

Helped Nagaur achieve its open defecation free
targets in record time

Kaushik Kumar

Achieved breakthrough success adding new toilets
in Nanded

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Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks – India’s new sanitation warriors

The Swachh Bharat Mission - Gramin (SBM-G) under the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation has been focused on eliminating open defecation and encouraging waste management in all of India’s roughly 650,000 villages across 651 districts. Towards this, it has been actively promoting the construction and sustained use of toilets inside homes.

To help strengthen capacities at the district level and to offer technical and management support for achieving the goals of the SBM-G, Tata Trusts has partnered with the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, to launch a unique pan-India initiative.

Tata Trusts hires, trains and deploys motivated young professionals as Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks (ZSBPs), one in each district, across the country. These young men and women help the district administration design,

implement and monitor various interventions under the SBM-G.

The initiative already has over 400 young professionals across the country, working directly with District Collectors to effect social change at an unprecedented scale and with impressive results. This makes it one of the largest fellowship programmes of this nature ever launched.

The four stories in this booklet are the first in a series, where we share ground-level experiences of how the ZSBPs have made a marked difference to the SBM through their dedicated efforts, re-connected villagers with the government’s representatives and given the programme a renewed drive.

These stories showcase the power and energy of India’s youth in making the dream of a Swachh Bharat come true. We hope they serve as an inspiration for youngsters who wish to join this unique programme and help transform India, one toilet at a time. ●



“ Tata Trusts is committed to working with the government. This programme is going to be a visionary programme for India and I assure you of our commitment to make India the kind of country that we all hoped for.

Ratan Tata
Chairman, Tata Trusts



CLEAN SWEEP

As a prerak for the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP) programme, Vibhore Maheshwari helped drive awareness and adoption of toilets in Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh through creative messaging

At 24 years, Vibhore Maheshwari has learnt a lot more as a Tata Trusts ZSBP prerak in the past seven months than his peers in the corporate world can hope to. An engineer who graduated from Netaji Subhas Institute of Technology in Delhi in 2015, he worked with Deloitte in Mumbai for a year-and-a-half, before being inspired by others who had chucked their jobs to work for social development.

Tata Trusts' ZSBP programme, with its unique alignment with the government's sanitation goals, was the perfect opportunity and he took it. "Joining an NGO would have allowed me to create limited social impact, and unlike the ZSBP, it wouldn't be backed by governmental support and resources," he says.

Joining as a prerak in Hathras, Uttar Pradesh, in May 2017, Vibhore tried to understand why villages in this district continued to lag behind on the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) goal to make India open defecation free (ODF). "Open defecation is more a social problem than about a lack of resources," he explains. "People in Hathras have mobile phones, motorcycles, pucca homes, and they spend lavishly on marriages and other social occasions. But they still don't understand the importance of building toilets inside their homes."

“Joining an NGO would have allowed me to create limited social impact, and unlike the ZSBP programme, it wouldn't be backed by governmental support and resources.”

Vibhore Maheshwari, prerak,
Hathras, Uttar Pradesh

NEW RULES

This called for a creative approach to convey the programme's message. The Hathras ZSBP team designed and rolled a series of engaging initiatives to build awareness and societal pressure on people regarding open defecation and its ill-effects on their health and dignity. The importance of building toilets in homes was the eventual call-to-action in all activities.

Among these were a *Rakhi ki Laaj* event on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan to felicitate brothers who gift toilets to their sisters, display of colourfully designed toilets in *melas* (village fairs), an ODF Cricket League, and a Diwali dinner hosted by the Hathras District Magistrate for *Gram Pradhans* of villages that had been declared ODF. Pressure was created in more unconventional ways such as giving children coloured stamps in school — green for those who used toilets and red for the others — to encourage them to convey the message at home.

The results of these innovative ideas began to show, soon enough. By December 2017, 165 villages in Hathras district had been declared ODF, with over 50,000 toilets built. With the preraks' help, the district administration is currently helping build 430 toilets per day as the programme grows in its reach in the region.

GOING THE EXTRA MILE

Vibhore admits this has been an unusually challenging yet rewarding role, quite unlike his brief corporate stint. "The day of a prerak begins as early as 4 am. We go for morning follow-ups where we confront people who are defecating in the open and persuade them to build and use toilets," he says. Making sure that



The Swachh Bharat Mission team at Hathras was actively involved in the construction of toilets

payments due to the *Swachhagrahis*, the block coordinators, and the incentive (*protsahan rashi*) given to beneficiaries are made on time, has also been a key focus area. All this has helped build villagers' trust in the programme and contributed to its renewed success.

Vibhore lists two areas that are critical in making a village open defecation free: "The triggering activities through community engagement processes should be effective, and the *Pradhans* should be motivated. If the *Pradhans* are motivated, they would motivate other *Pradhans* to follow up with the village folk to build toilets," he says. ●

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

No. of *gram panchayats* in Hathras declared ODF

- Till May 2017: **2**
- Till Dec 2017: **165**

No. of toilets constructed in Hathras district

- Till May 2017: **30,000**
- Till Dec 2017: **50,000**



A RESOURCEFUL SOLUTION

With the help of local student volunteers, Jeevan Roy ensured that the ODF (open defecation free) targets for Dharwad district were met successfully

It didn't take Jeevan Roy, 26, long to figure out the reasons for the sluggish pace of building toilets in homes of Karnataka's rural Dharwad. Low awareness about the enabling nature of the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) and the support assistance they could benefit from were on top of the list. "Villagers said that they wanted toilets. But they were not aware of the process for availing financial assistance," he recalls.

For the newly minted civil engineer from the National Institute of Engineering in Mysore, this was exactly the kind of problem he had been looking to solve. A brief stint with L&T in Mumbai was enough to steer him towards his deeper interest in issues such as sanitation and social infrastructure. While studying for a master's degree in urban and regional planning

from CEPT University, Ahmedabad, Jeevan learned about Tata Trusts' prerak model for the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP) programme. "Knowing how big the problem of poor sanitation in India was, this was an opportunity to work at the grassroots level and make a difference," he says.

Soon after joining as a prerak for the Dharwad area in May 2017, he decided that mobilising support for funds to build toilets would be his primary goal, in addition to awareness-building activities. This would be done using the processes and tools that have been proven most effective in community-based interventions. "We followed the IEC (information, education and communication) and the BCC (behavioural communication change) models. Under the *Gram Vastavya*

programme, we conducted *jatas* (walks in the village) to understand their problems, discuss their issues and screen movies related to construction of toilets. People who had built toilets and were using them were asked to describe their experiences,” says Jeevan.

TAKING STOCK

The team began with a PRA (participatory rural appraisal), a visual approach for driving inclusive change. A rough map of the villages was drawn up, and the areas where people defecate in the open were marked with yellow powder. The villagers soon realised that nearly the whole map was covered with yellow powder, denoting human excreta.

The SBM team undertook a *Swacchata Siddhi Yatra* with the CEO of the Zila Panchayat, Dharwad, walking for more than 20km over three days to inform and sensitise people about the SBM. The team stayed overnight with the villagers, cooked food and ate with them. The *yatra* covered nine villages of Navalgund Taluka and touched 35,000 people. This struck a chord with the villagers, and their trust in the mission grew.

But funds continued to be a problem. Jeevan tackled this issue by helping secure bank tie-ups to facilitate loans to those ready



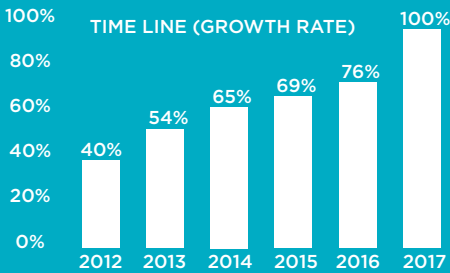
“Knowing how big the problem of poor sanitation in India was, this was an opportunity to work at the grassroots level and make a difference.

Jeevan Roy, prerak, Dharwad, Karnataka

to build toilets. This had a significant impact. Word spread and gradually more people came forward to construct toilets in their homes.

There was yet another challenge — villages did not have enough labourers and masons to build toilets on such a large scale. Jeevan reached out to youth volunteers in nearby NSS (National Service Scheme) camps for help. Around 2,500 student volunteers from NSS camps were roped in to help build 10,000 toilets in three blocks — Dharwad, Hubli and Navalgund. The students then fanned out in groups of three, each with a mason and a helper. Seeing the students working hard inspired the residents and they, in turn, convinced others and helped them build toilets in their homes.

These initiatives not only helped improve overall sanitation levels in the villages, they have also brought the district administration closer to the people. Dharwad exemplifies how the partnership of Tata Trusts with the district administration through the ZSBP preraks is powering the SBM to achieve its target of a cleaner India. ●



YEAR	HOUSEHOLDS WITH TOILET	YEAR	HOUSEHOLDS WITH TOILET
2012	56,408	2015	97,624
2013	76,292	2016	106,871
2014	90,956	2017	140,698



CLEANING UP MINDS

With a new improved plan and a freshly motivated field force, Alok Arunam helped Nagaur achieve its open defecation free (ODF) targets in record time

The efforts to make Rajasthan's Nagaur district ODF began in October 2015, when District Collector (DC)

Rajan Vishal launched a campaign named Niralo Nagaur under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). The idea was to achieve ODF targets for the district through behavioural

changes in people, and to achieve it by August 31, 2017. The campaign met with early successes during 2016. However, towards the middle of 2017, it began to lose steam.

Around this time, Alok Arunam, 28, came to know about the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP) programme. After a bachelor's and master's degree in engineering design from IIT Madras, he was completing a one-year liberal arts and leadership course as a Young India Fellow with Ashoka University, which stoked his interest in development, governance and public policy. "It occurred to me that grass-root challenges are far messier than the neat problems articulated at the GE Research Center. It felt as if I was meant to be here," he says.

Alok was excited at the prospect of

“I was excited at the prospect of working with IAS officers and contributing towards something meaningful at the ground level.

Alok Arunam, prerak, Nagaur, Rajasthan



working on ground-level issues with IAS officers, and contributing towards something more meaningful. He signed up as a prerak and was deployed in Nagaur in March 2017. It helped that Mr Vishal was still serving as the Nagaur DC, and was committed to renewing the programme's successful streak.

REGAINING MOMENTUM

With his help, Alok drew up a plan. Processes at the back-end and operating levels were streamlined. Targets were set, and a detailed activity calendar was drawn up. There was a hitch, though. Field-level workers were wary of approaching villagers, based on their experiences in the past. "People threw stones at us and abused us when we confronted them and tried to convince them to build and use toilets," says Priyanka Rani, a member of the District Resource Group (DRG). Alok re-trained and motivated the field workers and DRG team members to work closely with the Block Coordinators, *Gram Sewaks* and *Sarpanchs* in educating villagers about open defecation.

The MIS (management information system) was overhauled for efficient data management. The number of toilets being built was monitored daily. Alok ensured that the *protsahan rashi* (subsidy for building toilets) reached beneficiaries on time. This was key to motivate villagers to build toilets in their homes. Distribution of the monthly *Swachhata* newsletter of the *Niralo Nagaur* campaign was also monitored to ensure that the momentum of the programme stayed high.

The campaign's messaging earlier stressed on sanitation and cleanliness. This was strengthened by including a message about protecting the dignity of women and children through safe spaces for defecation. Emphasis was also placed on the allied objectives of the Mission such as menstrual hygiene through the *Chuppi Todo*, *Sayani Bano* campaign, and

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

No. of *gram panchayats* in Nagaur declared ODF

- Till May 2017: **272**
- As on August 17, 2017: **467**

No. of toilets constructed in Nagaur district

- From April to August 2017: **89,000**

All *gram panchayats* in Nagaur declared ODF in August 2017

personal hygiene through hand wash techniques under the Saaf Swacch Haath-Swasthya Rahe Saath campaign.

SIGNS OF CHANGE

All of this helped the *Niralo Nagaur* campaign regain momentum. While 272 *Gram Panchayats* had been declared ODF till March 2017, the new campaign ensured that all the 467 *Gram Panchayats* in Nagaur became ODF by August 2017, and the district was officially declared ODF. More than the numbers, what was impressive was the change in the mindsets of villagers. "We don't even think about defecating in the open now. We are happy that our village is now far cleaner and incidences of diarrhoea have reduced," says Bannaram, a villager in Oladhan in Merta block. The women especially acknowledge the work done by the SBM team. "We no longer need to hold on or wake up early in the morning for our ablutions. We also don't fear that someone may be watching us," says Sushila Devi, a resident of Oladhan. Women in Mundiyaad village, where people have built toilets with their own funds, now insist that they will marry their daughters to grooms whose households have toilets.

Meanwhile, Alok's stint as a prerak has strengthened his resolve to join the Indian Administrative Service. Having seen the district administration's workings from close quarters, he is convinced that this unique experience will come in handy when that happens. ●

SEA CHANGE

A variety of smart initiatives on a war-footing helped Kaushik Kumar achieve breakthrough success adding new toilets in Nanded

The case of Nanded district in Maharashtra was a particularly acute one. It had been woefully lagging behind on its open defecation free (ODF) targets under the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM). Between 2014 and 2017, only 115,000 toilets were built, resulting in just 150 out of 1,536 villages in Nanded turning ODF. To make up for lost time, 200,000 new toilets had to be added in 2017-18 alone.

This staggering challenge was right up 24-year-old Kaushik Kumar's alley as he had always been interested in the area of sanitation. While studying for his master's degree in water policy and governance from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, he had assessed a variety of sanitation missions and water-related policies.

Signing up as a Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak (ZSBP), Kaushik uncovered a few unique reasons for Nanded's poor track record, other than the typical issues of limited awareness and money. "Strategy planning at the district level was scattered, and people manning the mission at the grass-roots level were working without



Kaushik and his team took the *Sarpanchs* into confidence

proper direction. Also, some *Sarpanchs* were not ready to cooperate because of their political leanings," he says.

WAKE-UP CALL

A radical redesign of the communication was clearly needed. The Nanded SBM team came up with the idea of pitching a toilet as a 'savings account', and showing people how they could save money by building toilets and using them.

When asked, villagers admitted to typically incurring a medical expenditure of

Number of toilets built:

- Between 2014-17: **150,000**
- In 2016-17: Approximately **60,000**
- In 2017-18: **143,000**

Villages declared ODF:

- Total number of villages: **1,536**
- Number of villages declared ODF from 2014-2017: **150**
- Number of villages declared ODF in 2017-18: **961**

IMPACT IN NUMBERS

₹25,000-30,000 every year. Through detailed demonstrations they were shown how much of this expense was related to poor sanitation, caused in turn by open defecation. “We quoted real examples of health issues among local residents who lived near places where open defecation took place. There were some instances of deaths due to diarrhoea and stunted growth,” says Kaushik.

The team then explained how the villagers could save some of this money by building toilets with financial assistance under the SBM. The idea of potential savings on fertilisers by using the compost produced in the toilet pits was received favourably as well.

Kaushik decided to work on villages which were identified based on specific parameters, and ‘Missions’ were created based on these parameters. For instance, Mission Phoenix was about villages which had zero addition of toilets in the past year. For these, extensive ground-level activities such as Swacchata rallies, *Swacchata Shram Dan* and *Sarpanch* meets were conducted to raise awareness about the problems of open defecation and the SBM resources available for toilet building. Such activities were closely monitored along with data on progress made. *Gram Sewaks* were trained on how to effectively communicate stories about *Sarpanchs* who had done an exemplary job in making their village ODF.

PROMISE DELIVERED

One tricky area was bringing those *Sarpanchs* on board who were not keen to participate in the SBM because of conflicting political interests. Convincing them took time for Kaushik, but the results began to show once that was done. The *Nigarani Samitis* also helped create a fair bit of community pressure on the *Sarpanchs*.

One initiative that had significant impact on the numbers was the SBM team’s participation in the Malegaon Yatra in December 2017. An annual fair held in Nanded district, the *yatra* sees an average footfall of 1 to 2 lakh people over a five-day period.

A stall was put up to disseminate information on the SBM through display of toilet models, distribution of booklets and posters, and organising spot quizzes around sanitation.

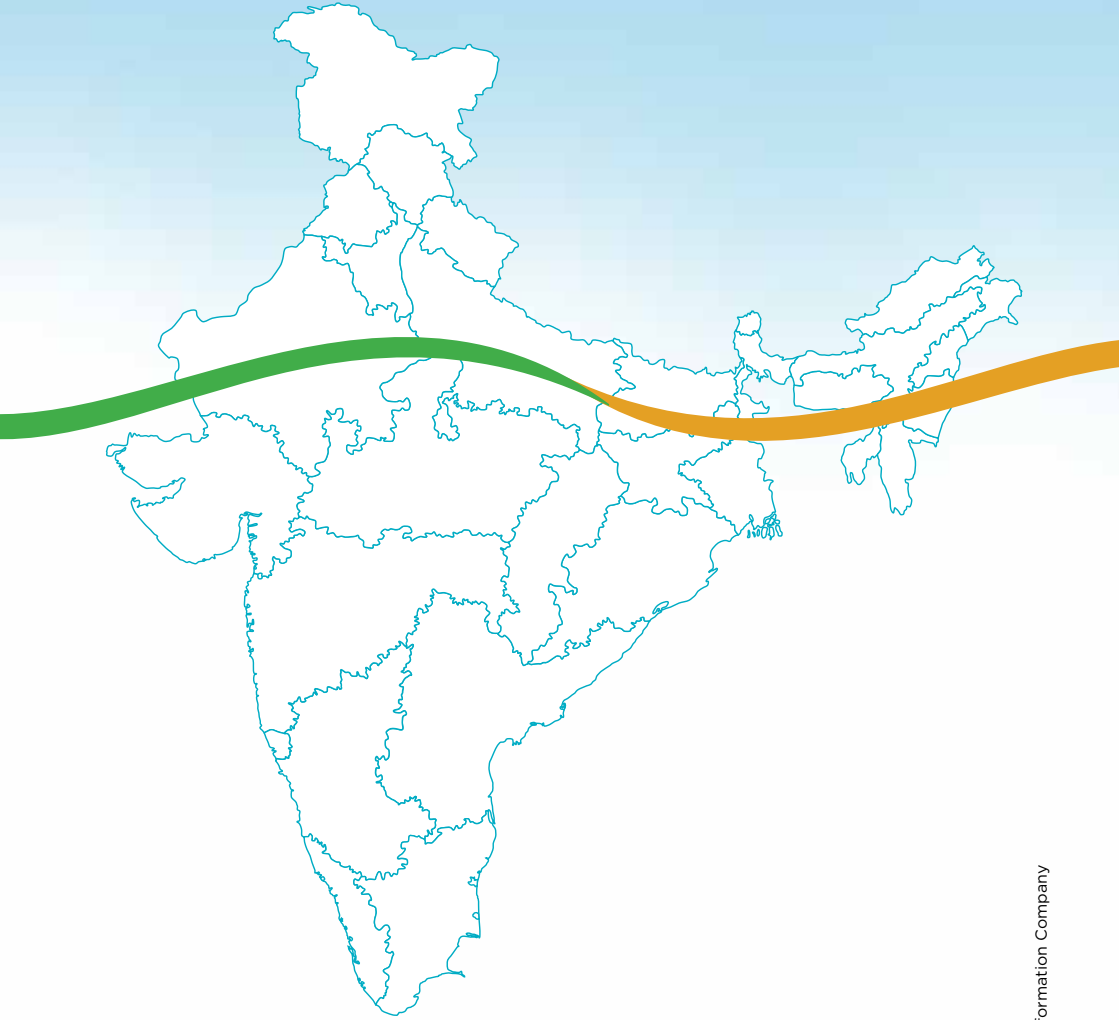
These relentless efforts have finally borne fruit — compared to the previous financial year’s total of 60,000 new toilets, this year 143,000 toilets have already been completed, and Kaushik and his team are well on their way to meeting the year’s target of constructing 200,000 toilets.

Importantly, Kaushik says the experience has been tremendously enriching, and taught him more than he expected. “Certain roles and responsibilities assigned to us were open-ended. We could all take our own decisions, analyse the ground realities and then act. This was important in my development as an individual,” he signs off. ●



“ My stint as a *prerak* has been important in my development as an individual.

Kaushik Kumar, *prerak*, Nanded, Maharashtra



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Printed in 2018