



Zila Swachh  
Bharat Preraks

# India's Sanitation Warriors:

Torchbearers of the Swachh Bharat Mission



A woman wearing a yellow and green sari with a floral border is writing the words 'इज्जत घर' (Izzat Ghar) in red on a white wall. She is wearing several bangles on her right wrist and a ring on her finger. The wall has a decorative window with a green circular ornament. The text is written in a stylized, bold font.

इज्जत  
घर

*Izzat ghar means house of dignity. These were the words written by Hemwanti Chaudhary of Ramapur Sanadiya village, Ara, Sadar Block, Bihar, the very first day her toilet was completed. For her, this toilet is a symbol of empowerment and dignity.*

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# Sushree Uma Bharti

Minister of Drinking Water and Sanitation

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*The Tata Trusts joined hands with the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen), Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, in December 2016, and launched a collaborative initiative – the deployment of a cadre of young professionals to add impetus to the implementation of the mission on the ground. Christened Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks, these youngsters have been responsible for supporting district administrations in implementing the Swachh Bharat Mission in rural India with speed and quality.*

*The preraks, as they have come to be called, are assisting their respective District Collectors make every village in their district open defecation free (ODF) and are now contributing towards ODF-plus activities like solid and liquid resource management. They have been instrumental in changing sanitation behaviour at the grassroots.*

*I believe the contribution of these Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks for the Swachh Bharat Mission will have a lasting impact in the years to come and help sustain the mission's positive impact on rural health and hygiene.*

*I would like to thank the Tata Trusts for the invaluable support of these young professionals who have worked diligently towards realising the dream of Bapu and our Honourable Prime Minister for a swachh Bharat.*

*I welcome this publication which archives the stories and contributions of these youngsters for posterity, and wish them all the best for the future.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Sushree Uma Bharti' written in a cursive style.

# Ratan Tata

Chairman, Tata Trusts

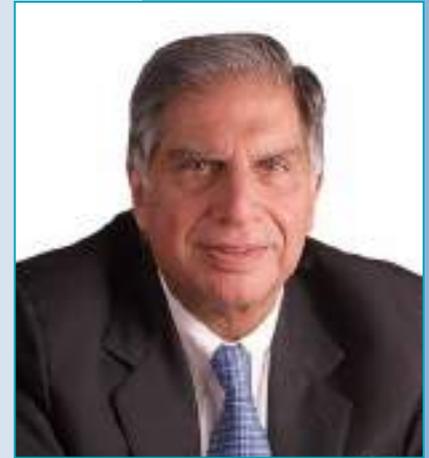
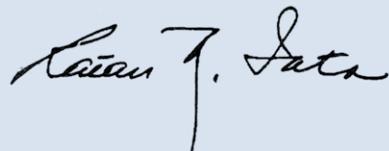
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*The Tata Trusts are amongst India's oldest philanthropic organisations, having worked since inception to transform traditional thinking around charity and introduce innovative ideas for social and community development. We are committed to bring positive and sustainable change in the lives of people, especially those who are marginalised by mainstream society.*

*Sanitation is a basic need of every human being and the use of proper toilets is a powerful route to hygienic and healthier living. Toilets are equally important in helping to preserve the dignity and privacy of women and girls in our society.*

*The Honourable Prime Minister has given due importance to this basic right to sanitation under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) since 2014. We are privileged to be associated with the mission as a partner for this country-wide exercise.*

*The Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak programme taps the potential and energy of India's youth in driving the vision that Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) encompasses. The programme has emerged as a pioneering public-private endeavour with impressive results – by helping build toilets in the remotest areas of the country and by bringing about sustainable changes in social attitudes and hygiene habits. We are all proud of how much the preraks have achieved, and wish them the very best for their future.*





# Parameswaran Iyer

Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation

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*The Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak initiative is the outcome of the Honourable Prime Minister's vision of making swachhta everyone's business. The initiative is a joint programme between the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation and the Tata Trusts.*

*The programme was launched in 2016 and more than 470 young professionals from various backgrounds were recruited to add momentum to the Swachh Bharat Mission. These preraks have been deployed in most districts of the country and they have worked in partnership with the District Collectors to accelerate the implementation of the programme. The preraks have worked on various aspects of the Swachh Bharat Mission, ranging from behaviour change in the community to monitoring the progress on ground using data and technology. They have been responsible for motivating rural Indian villages to adopt safe sanitation practices in everyday life. I have come across preraks who became the eyes and ears of their District Collectors and successfully helped their districts become open defecation free.*

*I am grateful to Tata Trusts for providing us with this valuable resource and I am optimistic they will continue to act as change agents in their future endeavours as well.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Iyer', written in a cursive style.

A portrait of Jamsetji Tata, an elderly man with a long white beard and a black turban, looking slightly to the right. The background is a textured, light brown color.

# Guiding principle of **Tata Trusts**

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“*There is one kind of charity common enough among us, it is that patchwork philanthropy which clothes the ragged, feeds the poor, and heals the sick. I am far from decrying the noble spirit which seeks to help a poor or suffering fellow being. However, what advances a nation or a community is not so much to prop up its weakest and most helpless members, but to lift up the best and the most gifted, so as to make them of the greatest service to the country.*”

– **Jamsetji Tata**



Tata Trusts' mission  
“**to positively  
and sustainably  
impact 100  
million lives  
by 2021**”

is a reflection of its  
commitment to fulfil  
the vision of Founder  
Jamsetji Tata.

## Areas of work



Healthcare



Energy



Rural Upliftment



Education



**Water & Sanitation**



Urban Poverty Alleviation



Arts, Crafts and Culture



Innovation



Institutions



Individual Grants



**TATA WATER  
MISSION**  
A TATA TRUSTS INITIATIVE

Improving access to safe water and environmental sanitation has been a key focus area for Tata Trusts. Given the urgent need for making a significant difference, which calls for a more rigorous and focused intervention, and in order to create visible, scalable and sustainable impact, the Trusts decided to approach the problem in a mission mode.

Tata Water Mission aims to create a healthy future for millions of Indians through provision of safe, assured and adequate drinking water, along with improved sanitation and hygiene facilities for underserved communities. The mission advocates a decentralised, demand-responsive and community-managed approach to achieve the goal and it also aims at promoting innovative technological and economically sustainable solutions.

### Tata Water Mission outreach

**12**

states

**4,000+**

villages

**3**

million  
individuals

# Swachh Bharat Mission



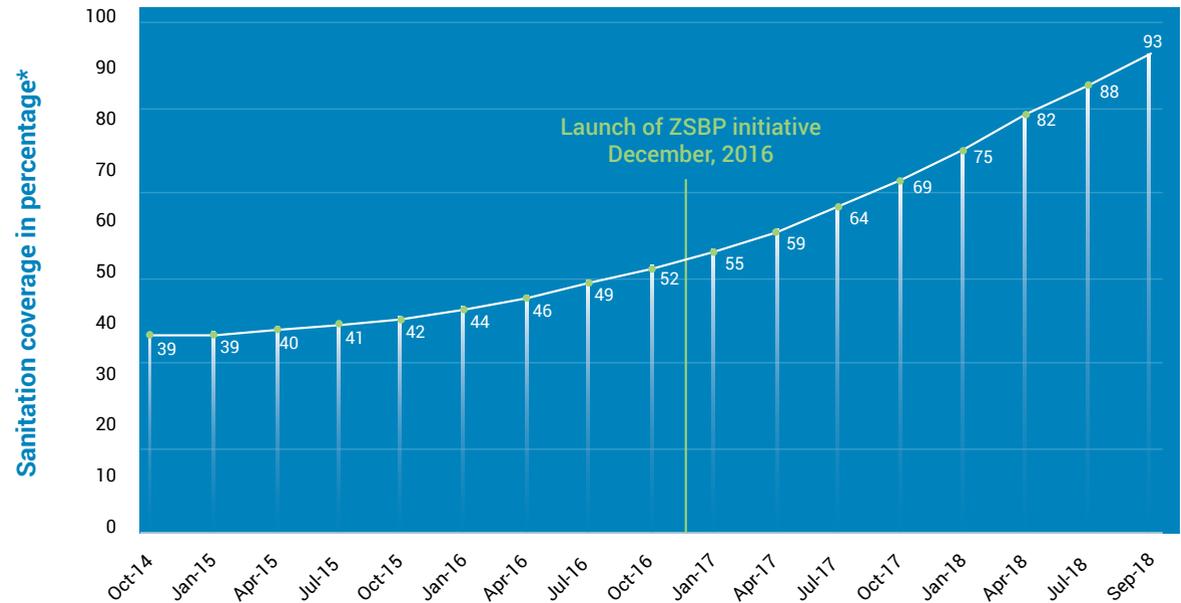
The Swachh Bharat Mission was launched on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 by the Prime Minister of India to accelerate the nation's efforts to achieve universal sanitation coverage and to focus on safe sanitation.

There are two sub-missions, the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and the Swachh Bharat Mission (Urban). Together, they aim to achieve Swachh Bharat by 2019, as a special tribute to Mahatma Gandhi on the occasion of his 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary. The Mission Coordinator is the Secretary, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS).

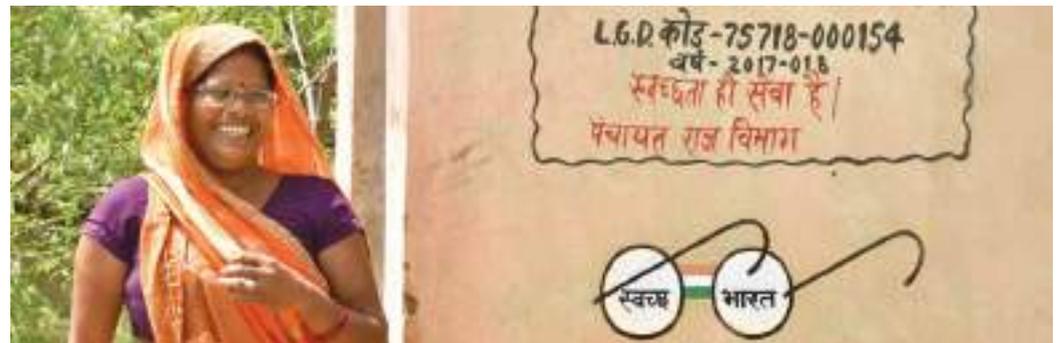
In rural areas, Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) [SBM (G)] works to make gram panchayats open defecation free (ODF), clean and sanitised through solid and liquid waste management activities.

ODF implies the termination of faecal-oral transmission – defined as no visible faeces found in and around villages and with every household and public institution using safe technology options for disposal of faeces. The mission aims to attain ODF status by removing bottlenecks to progress, and focusing on critical issues that are affecting outcomes. ■

## Progress of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen)



\*<https://sbm.gov.in/sbmdashboard/>



# The Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks

Across India, there is a toilet being built every second. Rural India is in the middle of a remarkable transformation as it changes traditional habits to adopt modern sanitation concepts. By 2019, the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, India aims to be ODF. And this amazing sanitation success story is being supported by a group of young, motivated men and women.

There are 475 Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks (ZSBP) who are busy assisting the district administration in implementation of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). These young professionals have left behind urban lifestyles and cushy jobs to work with villagers, gram panchayats and district officials. They campaign to motivate communities to build

toilets, help district officials in data analytics, track payments of government incentives, take pictures of constructed toilets and in short, keep the wheels of the Swachh Bharat Mission rolling at top speed.

The genesis of the ZSBP programme lies in the pilot intervention of Tata Trusts and MDWS. In 2016, Tata Trusts had partnered with district administrations in 25 districts across three states under SBM to make them ODF. To support the implementation, the Trusts had deployed young men and women at the District Collector offices, who achieved quick progress.

Impressed by the work, the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation asked the

Trusts to replicate the model in 26 states. Thus was born the Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak programme, formally unveiled in December 2016. Time was of the essence with about 30 months to go and Tata Trusts swung into action. Online job postings yielded over 18,000 applications which were whittled down to a few hundred finalists.

By March 2017, the preraks started training for their challenging role. The first batch of India's sanitation warriors was out in the field by April 2017, working to build toilets on a war footing. India's battle against poor sanitation is being fought by the Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks, on behalf of the people and the government. ■

## Milestones of the ZSBP programme

**\$5 million**  
annual budget

**18,000+**  
profiles screened

**4,000+**  
young professionals  
interviewed

**475**  
ZSBPs hired and placed  
in 450+ rural districts

**26**  
states covered in  
the programme



# Making of a prerak



Making India ODF was and continues to be a massive mission – a pan-India exercise, spanning more than 700 districts, involving a billion people and several government departments. The challenge that Tata Trusts faced was to empower a group of youngsters (average age 25 years) to take on this tough goal.

The training had to be domain level – sanitation issues, technical aspects of the Swachh Bharat Mission, the functioning of district-taluka-block-gram panchayat administrations, community mobilisation for behavioural change, etc. It also had to cover soft skills – communication, leadership, team building, etc. And then there was the core requirement – to trigger passion and motivation. The preraks had to feel pride in participating in this nation-building initiative.

Tata Trusts partnered with the University of Chicago Booth School of Business to support the training. The 475 preraks were trained in batches of

40-50 over a series of three-day workshops held in New Delhi.

The preraks were trained to work on SBM (G) management information system (MIS) tools to be able to use data analytics to identify problem areas. On-the-job training was provided to help them tackle day-to-day challenges faced in the field while behavioural and communication skills training were imparted so that the preraks could garner the trust and support of local officials and the villagers. They were equipped with globally accepted Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS) tools that would help ensure sustained adoption of toilets.

Obstacles were anticipated. This preparation proved useful in several cases when the preraks faced difficulties. Attitudes would change slowly only after local officials realised that these young men and women were keen to help, and had access to centralised resources for problem resolution.

Above all, the preraks had to be mentally prepared for the complexity and diversity of the challenges in different locations.

The lesson was clear – there's no red carpet; be prepared for setbacks; get innovative; stay focused on the purpose – making your district open defecation free. ■

## The prerak profile



**25 years**

average age of preraks



**80%**

with post graduate degree



**35%**

women preraks



**70%**

with more than 2 years of working experience



**12**

national-level training conducted before deployment in batches of 40-50

## The UChicago approach

Our approach was simple. Instead of trying to make the ZSBPs specialists in a few tools and techniques, we focused on making them agile thinkers, analytical questioners and realistic problem solvers. Based on our interviews with young professionals / fellows in similar roles, we learnt that they were going to face a new and complex problem on the field every day. In that context, the best objective a three-day training could achieve for the ZSBPs was to make them acutely aware of their natural strengths and shortcomings, which they could leverage effectively on the field.

While designing each module of the training, we focused on constantly reminding the preraks of their role in the ecosystem they were entering – that of orchestrators and enablers rather than 'heroic' problem solvers. Training the preraks to rely on data and evidence rather than only on experiences proved helpful in leveraging their limited experience for the benefit of the ZSBP programme rather than against it."

– **Leni Chaudhuri**, Country Director, Tata Centre for Development at the University of Chicago



# Meet our **preraks**



*There have been 475 committed young men and women, working across India to drive the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen). Here, we present five prerak stories – each working in India's north, south, east, west and central zones. These stories have been selected to showcase how their actions on the ground reflect the needs of the locations they work in*

# Smart planning

*With a new improved plan and a freshly motivated field force, Alok Arunam made Nagaur's ODF targets in record time*

**Alok Arunam** has a Masters 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 when he heard about ZSBP. "It occurred to me that grassroot challenges are far difficult and messier than the neat problems articulated at my corporate job. It felt as if I was meant to be here," he says.

Alok signed up as a prerak and was deployed in Nagaur, Rajasthan in March 2017. With the help of the District Collector, Rajan Vishal, Alok drew up a plan to streamline processes at the back-end and set targets.

The work was not easy. Field-level workers were wary of approaching villagers. "People threw stones at us and abused us when we 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 co-ordinators, gram sewaks and

## Alok Arunam

Age: 28 years

IIT-M, Ashoka Foundation

Nagaur, Rajasthan:

Declared ODF in August 2017

sarpanchs towards educating villagers about open defecation. The MIS was overhauled for more efficient data management. The number of toilets being built was monitored daily. Alok assisted the district administration in ensuring that the incentive payments reached beneficiaries on time. This was key to motivate villagers to build toilets in their homes.

The campaign was strengthened by including a message about protecting the dignity of women and children through safe spaces for defecation. Emphasis was placed on the allied objectives of the mission such as menstrual hygiene management through the Chuppi Todo, Sayani Bano campaign, and personal hygiene through hand wash techniques under the Saaf Swachh Haath-Swasthya Rahe Saath campaign. All of this helped the Niralo Nagaur campaign regain its momentum and the district to become ODF. ■



# The change within

*Badapbiang T Dkhar's satyagraha against open defecation changed attitudes and lives in Anjaw, a remote district of Arunachal Pradesh*

Anjaw is home to steep inclines, jungles and few motorable roads. The district has only one bank branch and a petrol pump. Most of Anjaw has no access to television, radio, internet, mobile networks and even newspapers.

**Badapbiang T Dkhar** (Badap), 27, joined Anjaw as a prerak in April 2017. "If Mahatma Gandhi had his Champaran, then Anjaw is my Champaran," she says.

She found that people didn't feel the need to construct toilets in their homes. Moreover, the absence of motorable roads made it difficult and expensive to transport bricks and cement to the villages.

As a solution, the team hit upon the idea of pre-fabricated toilets – a metal frame with galvanised iron sheets serving as the roof with locally available stones and rocks used to line the pits. This lighter option also brought down transportation costs.

Badap launched a door-to-door campaign to

## Badapbiang T Dkhar

Age: 27 years

Lawyer, National Law College,  
Jodhpur

**Anjaw, Arunachal Pradesh:  
Declared ODF in December 2017**

build awareness. "I used to walk for hours and sometimes slept in the jungles and ate at the houses of complete strangers," she recalls. She found women more receptive to the idea of building toilets in their homes as they faced difficulty defecating in the open. The team joined hands with local women and youth associations to roll out awareness activities, such as menstrual health and hygiene programmes for

girls and women. These activities helped change people's attitudes and they began to come forward to build toilets in their homes.

Badap says the prerak experience was transformative for her. "I wanted to show the villagers that the country does care for them." Anjaw being declared ODF was a wonderful reward. ■



# Clean sweep

*Vibhore Maheshwari helped drive awareness and adoption of toilets in Hathras district of Uttar Pradesh (UP) through creative messaging*

Vibhore Maheshwari worked with Deloitte in Mumbai for a year-and-a-half, before joining as a prerak in Hathras, UP, in May 2017.



## Vibhore Maheshwari

Age: 24 years

Engineer, NSIT, Delhi

Hathras, UP:

Towards ODF status

Here he tried to understand why villages in this district continued to lag behind on the SBM goals. “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.”

This called for a creative approach to convey the programme’s message. The Hathras ZSBP team designed and rolled out 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.

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 (village heads) of villages that had been declared ODF.

“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.

“The day of a prerak begins as early as 4am. We go for morning follow-ups where we confront people who are defecating in the open and persuade them to build and use toilets,” says Vibhore. Vibhore’s work with the community has accelerated the district’s campaign to attain ODF status. ■

# Learning by doing

*Making Chhindwara district ODF helped Minal Ingale understand the working and impact of large-scale social change projects*

**Minal Ingale** was assigned to Madhya Pradesh's Chhindwara district as a prerak in August 2017. "I always wanted to work in bigger projects run by the Government which impact people positively," she says.

Chhindwara is a largely tribal district, boasting of a few medium-sized industries. Minal, along with the district SBM (G) team, conducted house visits to educate people about the health risks associated with open defecation and the benefits of using modern toilets. People responded positively to these messages. The larger goal of making India completely ODF by 2019 especially struck a chord with everyone.

This helped push the toilet coverage numbers, but many villages were still lagging behind. Minal along with the district SBM (G) team realised they had to get more innovative now with the outreach activity. Along with the swachhagrahis, the district CEO and other local officials, motorbike rallies were held across the district.

Each rally saw a group of around 200 riders travelling 2-3 hours across villages, spreading



## Minal Ingale

Age: 27 years

Masters in Social Work, TISS, Mumbai

**Chhindwara, Madhya Pradesh:  
Declared ODF in March 2018**

awareness about toilet construction and urging local communities to make their villages ODF soon.

Minal also realised that the best advocates

for the cause of the SBM (G) were children. The team began to engage with them in households and in schools to persuade the elders to build toilets in their homes. With a highly patriarchal culture, few women in the villages would participate in the ZSBP activities. However, when they understood that their children stopped becoming sick once their villages became ODF, more women began to come forward and convinced the men to build toilets.

Chhindwara district was finally declared ODF in March 2018. And Minal says the entire experience was one to cherish. ■

# Resourceful solutions

*With the help of local student volunteers, Jeevan Roy ensured that the ODF targets for Dharwad district were met successfully*

“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,” says **Jeevan Roy**, who joined as a prerak in Dharwad in May 2017. Jeevan focused on community-based interventions, such as walks in the village, discussions of issues, screening of movies related to construction of toilets. People who had built toilets and were using them were asked to describe their experiences.

The team used a visual approach to drive 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 yatra with the CEO of the Zila Panchayat Dharwad, walking for over 20km over three days to inform and sensitise people about the SBM. The team

## Jeevan Roy

Age: 26 years

Engineer, NIE, Mysore

**Dharwad, Karnataka:**

**Declared ODF in November 2017**

lived 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.

Jeevan assisted the administration to help secure bank tie-ups and facilitate loans to those ready 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 2,500 youth volunteers in nearby National Service Scheme camps for help. Dharwad exemplifies how the ZSBP programme is powering the SBM to achieve its target of a cleaner India. ■



# Scale and impact

The ZSBP programme achieved scale and impact in energising the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) by applying principles of data-driven management and by using globally accepted tools for communication and community engagement to trigger behavioural change in the community.



# A data-driven approach to sanitation



Nothing tells the story better than numbers. One key reason the ZSBPs were able to accelerate the SBM was their training in working with data. The prerak initiative introduced evidence-linked management practices to the programme. With the use of the MIS, they supported the district administration in constantly improving the efficiency of the mission.

In the initial days, one of the biggest challenges for most preraks was to ensure that the data collected and uploaded on the SBM (G) MIS was accurate.

Getting the system to work smoothly was the biggest impact that the ZSBPs had on the SBM. Here are a few stories of how this was accomplished:

## Addressing gaps

There had been slow progress in Maharashtra's Nanded district. With data analysis, prerak Kaushik Kumar and his team launched various activities aimed to create awareness and educate the public about the importance of

sanitation and hygiene. As a result 143,000 toilets were constructed in one year against 60,000 in the previous year.

## Smoother disbursements

Prerak Saritha Challuri and her team made sure all new toilets were geotagged and updated the data on the MIS on a war footing. It was a massive exercise that eventually helped classify 148 villages as ODF, allowed villagers to receive their incentives, and helped create widespread goodwill for the SBM (G) programme.

## Prioritising villages

Prerak Har Gobinda Boro was able to draw attention of the local SBM (G) administration to those villages where efforts needed to be directed first. This



consistent data-driven approach helped the ZSBP team obtain the required support to make the district ODF with nearly 100% geotagging done, all in a year's time.

### **Better efficiency**

Prerak Pooja Gupta introduced a popular and free project management software to help with faster analysis of data and report generation, and arranged for training on its usage. This freed up more productive time for the swachhagrahis and the district administration.

### **Faster payments**

Prerak Swathi K's first job at Nagapattinam, Tamil Nadu, was to speed up payments. Funds for government initiatives in Tamil Nadu follow a procedure. They are paid by the state to the district, which releases it to the Village Panchayat Level Committees (VPLC), and then the beneficiaries. Swathi worked to foster better coordination among the district, block and panchayat administrations, and payments began to be made on time. ■



# Community outreach



A toilet in the middle of a village fair sounds odd, but that was one of the many innovative methods used by the preraks to build awareness and spread the message of the SBM (G).

Brightly coloured toilet models in craft fairs, stalls set up at large melas to spread awareness, walks of 'shame' early in the morning to persuade villagers using the open fields to build toilets, motorbike rallies across the district, rakhi-tying events, lunches for the village pradhans with the district magistrate, hand washing marathons, SBM messages on wedding cards and medical prescription pads, these were some of the unique methods adopted by the preraks to spread the message of good hygiene and sanitation and to get India building more toilets.









*Across the country, preraks worked extensively at the grassroot level to trigger behaviour change within the community. They won the confidence of the villagers and became their friend and guide in the journey to improve India's sanitation landscape*

# Triggering behaviour change

A key component of the success of the SBM was driving behaviour change in the community. Much of the work done by preraks was to encourage people to change their defecation habits. Through the design and execution of creative behavioural change communication (BCC) campaigns,



the preraks were able to reshape villagers' understanding of hygiene, sanitation and waste management. The approach was derived from their training in Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS) techniques, and their own passion and resourcefulness in winning the trust of the people.

Technology played an important role here. With the help of Virtual Learning Centres (VLCs), Tata Trusts were able to reach out

to a large number of people (swachhagrahis, village sarpanchs and district and block level SBM (G) officials) for sharing knowledge on good practices in pushing SBM.

The VLCs allowed two-way communication and interactivity for better effectiveness and feedback. The technology enabled the mission to achieve a wider reach by engaging 500-600 people across multiple locations at one time.

This smart use of technology helped optimise costs, changed behaviours sustainably and delivered results faster than ever before. ■





# A successful **public-private partnership**

There has been a dramatic increase in the number of toilets being built, number of households with toilets, and number of districts declared ODF. At the end of March 2017, India had about 65% of districts declared ODF. By September 2018, that figure has jumped to 92.6%. That's a third of India covered in 18 months. The ZSBPs played a strong role in supporting this progress.

The success of the ZSBP programme is a testament to the power of the public-private partnership model. Tata Trusts took on the onus of the national recruitment drive, interviewing and hiring talented young professionals, and paying their salaries and allowances. The MDWS facilitated the placement of ZSBPs at the districts and coordinated with the state governments. Together, they shared the responsibility of the initial training and capacity building. They also monitored the performance of the preraks who worked to bridge the gap between the district administration and the beneficiaries in the villages, maintained the SBM MIS dashboards, and drove progress on the ground.

Some of the key stakeholders talk about the ZSBP initiative.





## R Venkataramanan

Managing Trustee, Tata Trusts



The Honourable Prime Minister of India, Mr Narendra Modi, spoke about the issue of sanitation in his speech on Independence Day, 15<sup>th</sup> August 2014. This has revolutionised and galvanised the nation on to a positive and sustainable change. The change is not only about sanitation alone but also making it a people's movement where grassroots communities participate in the behavioural change process across the country.

We are privileged to be a part of the initiative and contribute in a small way through the unique Zila Swachh Bharat Prerak initiative. The preraks are driven by a deep sense of purpose inspired by the

Prime Minister's vision. They have been working in the remotest parts of the country for more than 18 months, bringing together communities and converging different stakeholders with a view to create a positive impact in rural India. They infused fresh enthusiasm and energy into a massive mission, brought innovative thinking to the tasks at hand and served as enablers of efficiency and target-oriented problem-solving.

We are grateful for the opportunity given to the Trusts and the confidence reposed in these young and energetic professionals, and we hope to continue to contribute towards achieving a New India.

## Divyang Waghela

Head, Tata Water Mission, Tata Trusts



The ZSBP initiative has been successful for several reasons. The main one, of course, is the quality of the individuals chosen to be preraks. This is a team of professional, committed individuals doing a very good job in driving the important social mission of Swachh Bharat. Another aspect was the timing. By the beginning of 2017, it was imperative to get the ZSBP programme going since the task was to accelerate the Swachh Bharat Mission. Tata Trusts and the MDWS worked to make the ZSBP initiative a reality within a

very short span of 100 days. The preraks were trained to hit the ground running and they did.

The other key reason for the programme's success is that the preraks were given full support by the MDWS and the state and district administrations, who have taken them on board and empowered them. ZSBP is a significant programme from Tata Trusts and reiterates their commitment to India and to make the country open defecation free.



**V Radha**  
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Drinking  
Water and Sanitation



**Samir Kumar**  
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Drinking  
Water and Sanitation

The Zila Swachh Bharat Preraks have given a new dimension to the implementation of the Swachh Bharat Mission. Their youthfulness has been instrumental in giving us a non-biased view of the ground realities. Their work in mobilising

the youth of rural India has worked in changing behaviours and in the adoption of better sanitation practices, and is deeply appreciated. The insights provided by these young professionals have given us an idea on how to tackle a massive programme such as the Swachh Bharat Mission. We have come across a few preraks who, through their ingenuity, have brought about lasting behaviour change at the grassroots level. Their contribution has been highlighted on a number of forums and we thank Tata Trusts for providing us with this valuable cadre. We wish all of them the very best for their future.

**Mohammad Ishfaq**  
Additional Secretary, Water Supply and Sanitation, SBM (G), Punjab



The preraks are youngsters with new ideas and energy, and no past baggage, which motivated our existing teams. They were able to give us a clearer picture of the ground realities and issues which our existing staff sometimes missed, sharing the information on what was really happening on the ground, and the gaps we needed to address.

They helped us with the monitoring of quality indicators for the SBM (G) programme, such as geotagging and MIS implementation. In districts such as Ferozpur and Gurdaspur, the

preraks practically worked like nodal officers for the SBM (G). The preraks have made a big difference in these districts. Tata Trusts have played a very positive role in the communication aspect of the SBM (G). They have trained and motivated our teams towards launching Information, Education and Communication (IEC) campaigns; people from the Trusts supported us with creative ideas and communication material for educating beneficiaries and motivating them for toilet construction.

**Akash Deep**  
Mission Director,  
SBM (G), Uttar Pradesh



ZSBPs have been crucial as an external wing in assessing the implementation and execution of the entire mission, fuelling it with their young, zealous energy. The training at the technical front has been apt. It can be improved in the areas of association with the bureaucratic environment and existing government structure.

The major contribution of the preraks have been in the areas of social media mobilisation, escalation of awareness amongst the rural beneficiaries about the Swachh Bharat Mission, monitoring and evaluation of the system and processes, and training-capacity building where required.

The ZSBPs have been exceptional in improving the data flow throughout, providing an impartial overview of the monitoring and evaluation, and definitely maximising the social media presence.

## Indu Kanwal Chib

Director, Rural  
Sanitation, SBM (G),  
Jammu & Kashmir



The ZSBP programme has been successful because of the flexibility it has given to the Mission Directors to decide as to how this human resource (preraks) can be optimally utilised. As SBM (G) is a mission-mode scheme with a closure date, there was no time to waste. The ZSBP programme helped save time and achieve targets.

Moreover, the ZSBPs helped train government officials and field functionaries about MIS which helped in expediting the data collection and uploading process.

The ZSBPs have worked as nodal point among state, district and block level teams which helped the government to understand the challenges in a better way and provide appropriate solutions. The constant hand-holding extended by the MDWS and Tata Trusts has ensured the success of the ZSBP programme and SBM (G).

## Hiranmoy Chakma

Member Secretary,  
SBM (G), Dhalai, and  
Executive Engineer,  
PWD (DWS), Tripura



The ZSBP programme helped in district to gram panchayat / village committee level coordination, and coordination between the Ministry and the district. It was helpful in launching Ministry-level programmes.

The ZSBP programme has been particularly impactful in some specific areas. For example, in particular blocks where targets were high (such as Durga Chowmuhani and Manu blocks), the ZSBP has been quite helpful.

The prerak has helped in conducting intensive IEC programmes. The prerak has also come up with innovative ideas to reach the beneficiaries, for example, joining hands with the All India Baptist Church, which agreed to speak about sanitation and proper hygiene before every mass (Sunday prayer). This made a difference.

## Amit Kumar Singh

District Magistrate, Sonbhadra,  
Uttar Pradesh



As a DM, you are involved with multiple issues in the district. Thus, it is tough to provide consistent focus on projects of such a large magnitude as the SBM (G) on a day-to-day basis. A prerak thus eases this load on us and helps in managing the project in an efficient manner. They become our eyes and ears and keep us updated about actual ground realities and challenges.

At Hathras, the prerak played a crucial role in putting systems in place and taking the team together. SBM (G) started working like a well-oiled machine. My involvement was then limited to giving them directions or resolving challenges.

The prerak was very proactive in formulating innovative campaigns to bring about behaviour change – a critical factor behind 638 villages becoming ODF in the last 14 months as compared to just two villages in three years before that. Zila preraks also play a crucial role in bringing strong monitoring mechanisms and analysing data to find weak points. Because of this, fund flow management became very smooth in Hathras – which helped in building trust with the beneficiaries. As a result, Hathras became one of the rare districts where the incentive amount was given only post construction of toilet. The prerak also helped in building an ODF War Room in Hathras, which became a model for other districts to emulate.

**Neetu Kumari Prasad**  
Mission Director,  
SBM (G), Telangana



In my opinion, the ZSBP programme is quite useful for Telangana State. When Telangana was formed in June 2014, only 28% households had toilets. From June 2014 to September 2018, we have come from 28% to 89.2%.

There are around 22 preraks at the district level and they are all young, full of energy and drive. Despite the urban background of many preraks, they played a crucial part in strategy planning and then implementation of the programme. They are a crucial part of the district team.

Their major contribution is in social media updation. Most of our field staff are not very tech-savvy. Preraks have played a key role in spreading positive news regularly, and in creating awareness and understanding. We treat our preraks as our team and as our family.

**Balamurugan D**  
Mission Director  
– SBM (G),  
Special Secretary,  
CEO, JEEVIKA,  
and Commissioner,  
Self Employment – Rural  
Development Department, Bihar



The nature of the ZSBP programme has been very flexible, allowing us the freedom to utilise the services of the preraks in various capacities in the SBM (G) scheme. They can be deployed for a specific purpose or a specific campaign, or to oversee the entire programme in a particular location. The results of the deployment of the preraks have been spectacular with their contribution being comprehensive in all aspects of the programme, be it in community mobilisation or MIS management. The preraks are working very hard and providing good support to the district administration and state administration in meeting the objectives of SBM (G).

**Roopa Mishra**  
Director-cum-Additional Secretary, Drinking  
Water and Sanitation, Department of  
Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water, Odisha



The ZSBP programme has brought in fresh, competent talent to help the SBM programme implementation. The major positive impacts include bringing in a competent human resources pool. The network of ZSBPs across states provided opportunities for cross-learning. Data analysis, important for programme management, has been a major contribution. They have been responsible for closely watching the service-level parameters of SBM, which is essential for quality implementation.

**Pawan Yadav**  
Deputy Commissioner, Bishnupur, Manipur



The deployment of the ZSBP in my district has expedited the achievement of SBM (G) targets and in making the district ODF. It has facilitated in bridging gaps between the panchayats, swachhagrahis, village communities, the District Water and Sanitation Committee, and various departments.

The ZSBP programme has been particularly impactful in coordination; strategising about ODF targets and the district swachhata plan; community mobilisation and organising of events with the panchayats, gram pradhans, village communities and swachhagrahis; housekeeping of district MIS; IEC activities; ODF verification; plastic resource management and so on.

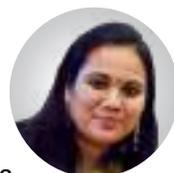
**Ashok Kumar Barman**  
Deputy Commissioner,  
Darrang, Assam



The ZSBP programme has given a thrust to the SBM (G) in my district. The prerak has been very useful in implementing the SBM in my district – bringing in ideas and organising the SBM staff for better results.

Some of the specific areas where the ZSBP programme has been particularly impactful are in planning and implementing physical progress, IEC campaigns, monitoring of household latrine construction quality, and so on. The preraks provided a holistic approach to the mission and have also constantly motivated and guided the SBM (G) staff to attain ODF status.

**Sheetal Verma**  
District Collector, Sitapur,  
Uttar Pradesh



The ZSBP programme gives a neutral, third-party, outside government perspective on vital issues related to sanitation. The presence of the ZSBP in the district ensures our focus on key issues is not lost.

The preraks have been able to get to the core issues inhibiting progress faster by sharing the best practices amongst themselves and solve them quickly than the departmental officers. The fact that they are able to provide actionable points (through a bird's eye assessment of their unit's progress) saves time in achieving the desired result. For any government department, such preraks bring fresh insights and tools to achieve results with greater efficiency.

**Ravindra Kumar**  
District Magistrate,  
Kannauj



The ZSBPs are very adept at guiding technical matters of SBM as they have a very good understanding of MIS, which has been considerably lacking in government initiatives since most of the work is slowly progressing to online reporting platforms. They're fast learners and are able to guide with good reasoning.

The prerak was very useful for swachhagrahi motivation and mobilisation and in increasing the geotagging in the district. He gave technical training for mobile application at block level to all village-level and grassroots-level workers. Hence, by increasing the number of users we were able to considerably increase geotagging within a very short time. The prerak is also good with data and can give a good representation of the work that has been done in the programme.

**Mrityunjay Baranwal**  
Joint Secretary, Deputy  
Commissioner / Deputy  
Magistrate, Bokaro



This programme brings in young professionals who have the zeal for working in the developmental sector and making changes, bringing in a new style of working as well involving technology very smoothly; and that helps in deriving the desired output. It provides resources at the appropriate level in the system and that helps catalyse work. This programme also has review mechanisms at different levels by different authorities, which provides an effective control mechanism to track the SBM parameters.

The ZSBP programme has supported SBM quite well in strategy design, monitoring and evaluation. In addition, preraks were good at co-ordination with other non-governmental and international organisations. It helped the administration to move deeper into the community and carry forward the mission efficiently.

**Surendra Kumar Meena**  
District Collector,  
Sundargarh, Odisha



ZSBP is a unique programme where the prerak assists the district administration and assesses the situation from a different angle, which in turn helps the district administration to resolve issues faster. ZSBPs have helped a lot in monitoring of SBM activities. There is free movement of information across the district and more transparency is maintained. ZSBPs have provided support in monitoring, induction of new IEC activities and capacity building.

**Rai Mahimapat Ray**  
Deputy Commissioner /  
District Magistrate, Ranchi



While we are working on a mission mode, we need an atmosphere where there is continued support of the government as well as professionals who are willing to work day in and day out to drive the mission. In ZSBPs, we have these energetic professionals with the zeal to work 24X7 and also take the whole team forward, so that the work gets done within the stipulated time frame. The support of central and state governments has had them working on their own, without much deterrence, which is a big plus.

The programme stands out for its unique approach. The convergence of the Ministry and Tata Trusts gives it an edge. A qualified resource proved to be better in monitoring the programme. Also, the innovative thoughts that come from this programme could be implemented in other programmes as well.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2017, the third anniversary of the Swachh Bharat Mission, the ZSBP initiative was recognised by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation's award for outstanding support to the implementation of the programme. Shri SS Ahluwalia, Minister of State for Drinking Water and Sanitation presented the award.





# Stories from **swachh India**

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*The preraks cast a wide net of community engagement, pulling in children, women, swachhgrahis, and local officials to support the sanitation effort. There are hundreds of interesting stories; we present a few here*

# Satyagraha se Swachhagraha: Chalo Champaran

*The Satyagraha se Swachhagraha campaign, a mega exercise to make Bihar free of unsanitary practices, was launched from the historically important region*

In April this year, a massive crowd of 20,000 swachhagrahis (sanitation motivators) descended upon the town of Motihari in the Champaran district of Bihar. Champaran holds a special place in India's history. A century ago, Mahatma Gandhi had launched his satyagraha approach in Champaran by supporting local indigo cultivators in their struggle against the oppressive yoke of British laws.

This time around, Champaran was the scene of the 'Satyagraha se Swachhagraha' (SSS) campaign, a mega exercise to make the state free of unsanitary practices. An army of swachhagrahis came to Champaran for a week-long event from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018. To accommodate them, a massive tent city came up in the town of Motihari. About 10,000 swachhagrahis from Bihar were joined by an equal number of swachhagrahis from all over India.

The successful event was a result of collaborative efforts of various stakeholders lead by the government. ZSBPs played a very critical role in making it a grand success. Rohan Kumar Jha, 28, is the ZSBP state

coordinator for Bihar. He manages a large team of around 40 ZSBPs spread across the districts. Rohan was part of the planning and implementation process of the campaign. The entire team of state ZSBPs, led by Rohan, were all involved in drawing up and executing the logistics and itinerary for the visiting swachhagrahis during the week-long exercise.

More than 100 ZSBPs from across the country participated in the programme and

facilitated various interventions planned in the state. These ZSBPs guided the swachhagrahis in undertaking triggering activities and sharing their learnings with community members about their success stories.

The SSS campaign closed with the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Champaran on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2018 where he addressed the rally and praised the work of Bihar state officials in driving positive change. ■





# The young take charge

*It is said that children have the power to change the world. An essential contributor to the success of the ZSBP programme was the way preraks mobilised children to change mindsets and drive community participation. Across India, children were roped in as ambassadors of the programme and they lent their little might to the sanitation mission*

## **An army of helpers**

School children turned out to be Akshant Nagar's biggest driving force in helping Hoshangabad district in Madhya Pradesh become ODF. He organised a vanar sena (monkey brigade) comprising children from various schools in the block. He also conceptualised a Zidd Karo campaign, encouraging children to demand toilets from their parents and families. Akshant then persuaded children to prevent people from continuing with their old ways through the innovative Lota Ludkao campaign, where children toppled the water cans carried by people going to defecate in the open.

## **Stamp of approval**

In Hathras, Uttar Pradesh, Vibhore Maheshwari led a campaign to distribute coloured stamps to school-going children – green for those with

a toilet at home and red for those without. The children would go home and persuade their parents to build toilets at home so that they could get the green coloured stamps.

### Clean hands for all

Saritha Challuri was engaged in a mass Hand Wash Campaign organised by the District Collector in Jayashankar Bhoopalapally district in Telangana where 130,000 children from 1,200 schools in the district washed their hands between 12.00-12.10 pm on a single day. This event created mass awareness about the SBM and its objectives of improving sanitation standards.

### Youngsters at work

In Karnataka, Jeevan Roy reached out to student volunteers in National Service Scheme (NSS) camps for help. Around 2,500 volunteers from NSS camps helped build 10,000 toilets in three blocks – Dharwad, Hubli and Navalgund. The students fanned out in groups of three, along with masons. Seeing the students working hard inspired more people to build toilets in their homes. ■



# Winning hearts, cleaning minds

*In Mansa, Punjab, the ZSBP team was supported by Tata Trusts in making connections with the local communities*

For Binder Kaur, 37, going to the fields for defecation was a daily humiliation. “We women had to go in the dark, before 5.30am. Even then, farm owners used to spot us, and drive us away,” she recalls.

The residents of Gobindpura village learnt about the SBM (G) incentive for toilet construction from the village panchayat. Convinced by the efforts of the local ZSBP team, Kaur’s family eventually signed up. Today, a brand new toilet and bathroom adorns the courtyard of her

otherwise frugal home. Thanks to the ZSBP programme, Mansa district now shines as an example of what focus and smart engagement can do to break down traditional social barriers.

The ZSBP team started with educating the villagers on adoption of toilets as a safe, dignified and modern alternative to open defecation. However, winning over their confidence was the biggest challenge.

The team used triggering activities like awareness of faecal oral transmission to promote hygiene. It also involved women and girls (the most severely affected), visual storyboards etc, to drum up awareness about the ill effects of unsanitary habits. Gurudwaras did their bit, promoting the Swachh Bharat

message along with the morning call for prayers. This helped create the much-needed urgency around toilet construction.

Another key point was toilet design. Earlier, the community used to build single-pit septic tanks, which were expensive and needed frequent cleaning. The SBM (G)’s twin leach pit design with its honeycomb structure saved on both cost and maintenance. Convincing beneficiaries about the new design was critical to the sustainability of the new toilets.

Funding was another obstacle. For those unable to afford the initial expenses (the SBM (G) incentive is credited into the beneficiary’s account only after completion and verification), the village sarpanch stepped in to arrange for informal lending of money and raw materials.

Mansa, with its 245 villages, was declared ODF on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2018. Jasjit Singh Gill, Executive Engineer with the Department of Water Supply & Sanitation in Mansa, is the designated District Sanitation Officer (DSO) for SBM (G). He sees the ZSBP programme as a big driver for attitudinal changes around sanitation and toilet construction. “Literacy is an issue here, and motivating people is tough. The ZSBP programme has achieved remarkable progress in overcoming these obstacles and convincing them to build toilets in their homes,” he says. ■



# Women power to the fore

*Women have played a pivotal role in changing the mindset of the community towards sanitation in Bihar*

Throughout the country, there have been examples of how women have supported the efforts of the government administration in eradicating open defecation. Bihar leads the way with women here spearheading the campaign.

In 2016, the Bihar state government decided to assign the responsibility of fulfilling the sanitation objectives of SBM (G) to Jeevika which looks after over six lakh Self Help Groups (SHGs) operating throughout the state. Jeevika is a department under the Ministry of Rural Development which handholds and manages these SHGs which have women from over 80 lakh households as its members. These SHGs are involved in various aspects of community development including livelihood enhancement, financial inclusion, skill development and health and sanitation. It was these women, lovingly called Jeevika didis, who were at the forefront in the battle against open defecation in Bihar.

Be it in the form of community mobilisers or as swachhagrahis, these women were actively involved in motivating the community at the ground level. They possessed the zeal, reach

and willingness to influence the community in adopting good sanitation practices.

Together with the preraks, the Jeevika didis ensured that the message of adopting good sanitation practices reaches every nook and corner of the state. With an orientation in shaping community behaviour, the preraks extensively trained these women in Community Approaches to Sanitation (CAS) and Behaviour

Change Communication (BCC) techniques. The preraks also provided support in terms of planning and implementation of activities at the village and gram panchayat level. These activities ranged from awareness campaigns to beneficiary identification drives. With the preraks providing strong support, the Jeevika didis are successfully helping the movement for a cleaner and healthier Bihar. ■



# Making Swachh Bharat sustainable



Sanitation coverage is rapidly growing and the country is moving towards becoming ODF. To ensure sustainability of the ODF status, the focus will be on a few key areas, such as technology innovation, behavioural change and communication to promote toilet usage and maintenance, and alternative financing mechanisms to promote self-sustaining systems.

Another aspect of a clean village is the proper disposal of solid and liquid waste. This will have to be addressed with an effective solid and liquid waste management (SLWM) solution based on a robust economic and institutional model that is integrated with technology.

There is a need to work closely with technology partners, academic institutions and private sector players so that appropriate technical, financial and management solutions can be demonstrated. A cluster approach can be tested for SLWM to achieve economy of scale in collecting, transporting, segregating, recycling and treating waste,

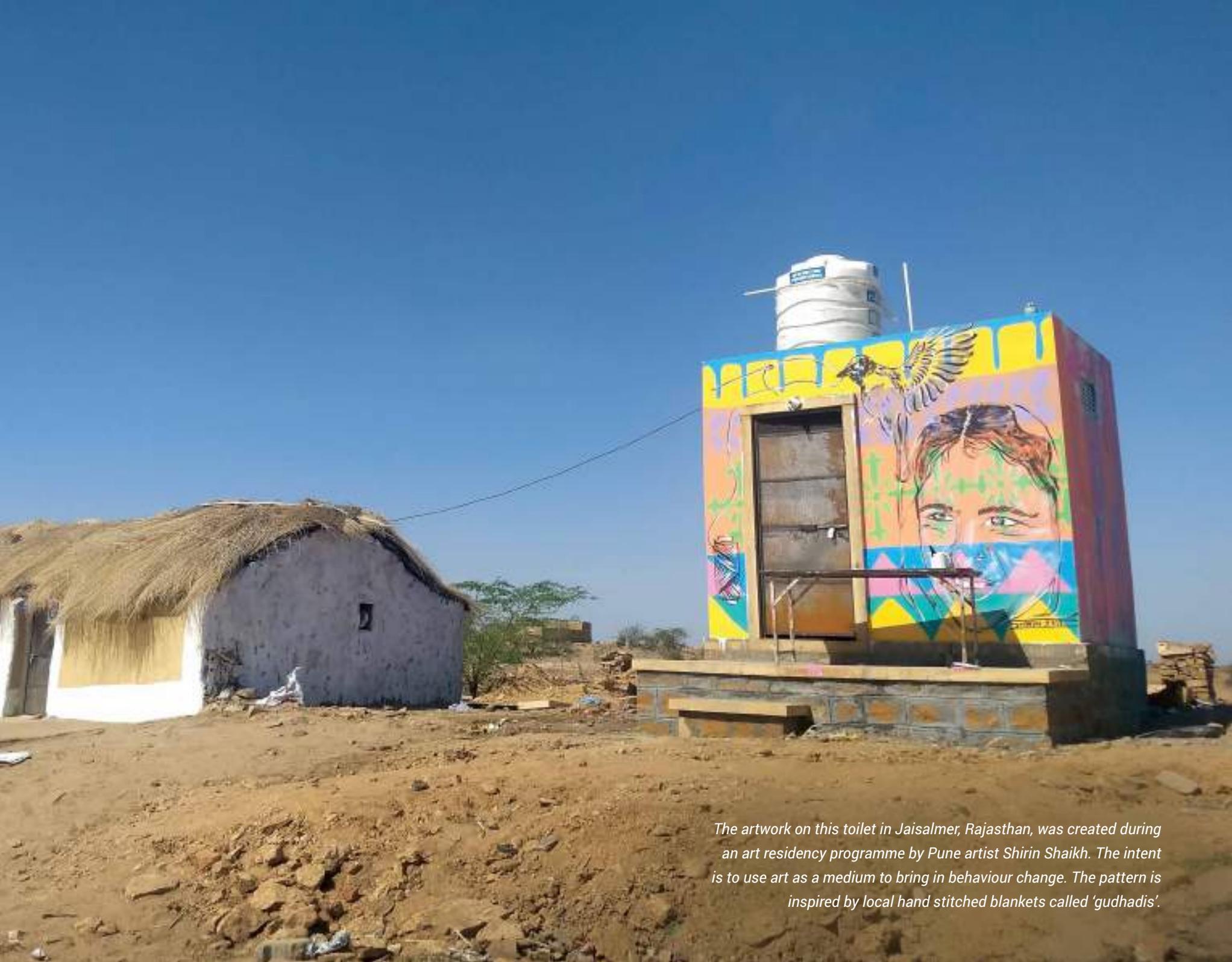
with involvement of local entrepreneurs and a user-pay based service delivery mechanism.

One of the objectives of the prerak model was to influence the government ecosystem by infusing innovative thought processes; this has been fairly successful in the ZSBP

initiative. Such a public-private partnership model, which strengthens the government system and supplements the efforts of the community, can be adopted in other areas for enhanced service delivery and sustainable development.

The social capital developed through this unique programme will surely continue to cater to the needs of government service delivery, either directly or indirectly, and also influence India's youth to be better citizens. ■





*The artwork on this toilet in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, was created during an art residency programme by Pune artist Shirin Shaikh. The intent is to use art as a medium to bring in behaviour change. The pattern is inspired by local hand stitched blankets called 'gudhadis'.*



# TATA TRUSTS

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