CASE STUDY

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“Toilets (or) Store Rooms?”

The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) brought a momentum of the importance of sanitation in India especially in rural areas. The sanitation drives to construct toilets in rural India government providing incentives, motivation, freedom and behavioural change. It’s a wonderful opportunity to build the toilet and the government also providing services to everyone such as General public, Marginalized communities, Handicaps etc.

But the government officials and experts are facing a more daunting challenge in - making villagers use them. In rural villages the toilet is a storage room. It’s a beautiful structure not to be used for dirty purpose. It can be used as a storage room, kitchen and living room and multipurpose. Now it’s quite a big challenge for the government to address these ground level issues as well as to bring the behavioural change in the rural sanitation.

Highlights of Eragarajupalli:
- Households: 185
- Total Population: 800
- Toilets constructed under SBM: 140
- First ODF village in the Mandal
- Sarpanch took initiation of construction
- Difficult to reach the village from Mandal head quarter and material supply chain problem
- But still achieved 100% construction of toilets and achieved the Open Defecation Free (ODF) status
- Few of them using very well and kept hygienically
- Few of the marginalized communities are using as a store rooms...etc
- Need to concentrate on the usage and behavioral change
Mr. Muthyalappa, a senior citizen living in the GP, is not eligible for the toilet and requested the GP team and Mandal level officials more than 5-10 times. While cross checking the base line survey, few of the new households were added to the list along with Mr. Muthyalappa. The construction process took lead with the help of sarpanch. While construction processes, Mr. Muthyalappa pre-planned the toilet structure and constructed as a small house shape. The construction process was over and the officials collected the toilet photo and released the final incentive amount. Mr. Muthyalappa removed the toilet basin and sold it, clearing the basin structure with cement. Right now, the toilet is being used as a small house and going out for open defecation.

Mr. Pedanagappa is one of the Handicap and senior citizen. His family benefited two toilets under SBM, one for him and one for his son name Mr. Pedanagappa. Right now, only female members are using the toilet and gents, along with Mr. Pedanagappa, are going out for open defecation, and the another toilet is being used as a kitchen.

Mr. Chinna Nagappa is also one of the beneficiaries of toilets under SBM with the help of Sarpanch. They have also constructed the toilet like a small house. While construction itself, officials have not even monitored and released the incentive amount. Now the toilet is being used as a small kitchen along with the family members going out for open defecation.

SBM Initiation: Gram Panchayat (GP) is located very far from the Mandal headquarter and it’s very difficult to reach the officials also. But Sarpanch Mr. J. Ranganath took the lead on initiation and construction process. He financially and technically helped villagers in toilets construction, and the GP declared as first ODF – GP in the Mandal level. But now the challenge was the usage of toilets. Moreover, villagers are using toilets as store rooms. Now it’s very big challenge for officials and experts how to bring the behavioural change in rural areas.

A 104 years old woman sold her goats and constructed the toilet and she inspired the entire country. But here the toilet importance is completely getting miss used and now the toilet has become shelter for goats. “Toilet is important than goats or Goats important than toilet” is a big challenging question to officials and experts to think how to improve the behavioural change in rural sanitation.