

Operation Malyuddh – Realizing the dream of ODF Harda

Literally meaning 'war against impurity', Operation Malyuddh started off as an experiment to engage communities and create an open defecation free environment in villages by shifting the onus from government to people of the village; slowly it turned into a more institutionalized campaign involving every possible stakeholder and making them a change agent in the behavior change process. The monotonous toilet construction scheme metamorphosed into an interesting and evolving scheme with few innovations on our way forward which are as follows –

- Branding the campaign with a name, logo, theme song and local brand ambassadors
- Training and usage of motivators, hired by a unique 3-step elimination process of group discussion, interview and a physical fitness-cum-punctuality test; selection was based not on educational qualification but on discipline, perseverance and communication skills
- Motivators are hired on a result oriented incentive system (15000/- per gram panchayat and 250/- per day) where the result is attainment of ODF status and not the number of toilets, thereby totally avoiding financial risk. Sustainability is taken care of by making provisions of top-up after 6 months (5000/-) & one year (5000/-) of ODF status attainment. The per-day honorarium was restricted to 90 days (optimal follow up duration, according to research).
- Each resident of the district is a stakeholder to the behavior-change drive; so more than 4000 people were oriented in an in-house triggering module; all those triggered, like religious leaders, caste and community association leaders, health, revenue, cooperative, dairy and ICDS workers, judiciary, police and forest officials, held power in various capacities to trigger larger sub-groups
- Bar association announced concession in advocate fees to clients from ODF villages. Caste Associations adopted villages to make them ODF and challenged that nobody can identify a person belonging to their caste practicing open defecation. Doctors started to write the status of toilets and open defecation in the medical prescription of their patients. Private school owners started counseling sessions for encouraging their students' parents to own a toilet in their home for better attendance of their kids. Cooperative societies that distribute food grains through fair-price shops started advising their customers to own toilets first and then come to collect their month's ration. Religious leaders started propagating the importance of ODF in Bhagawat Kathas of villages
- An affidavit was signed from all government and semi-government employees that they use the toilet and were given the knowledge of the various sections under which Open defecation is a crime under existing legal statutes. Reported crimes against women who went to defecate in the open were highlighted and villagers were made to resolve against any further incidents like those. Yoga Day, Teachers day, Students day, Diwali, Rakshabandhan, Senior Citizens' day, Women's day, Children's day, Drug addiction eradication day, Gandhi Jayanti, Independence day and Republic day were all given the 'cleanliness' angle to spread the message of ODF Harda and Malyuddh
- All types of technical options in toilet construction like pre-cast RCC, in situ cast block, traditional brick, fly-ash, advanced air fried blocks, etc were encouraged and no single model was emphasized. All possible toilet models are displayed in a Wat-San (Water&Sanitation) Park behind our office
- 'Cluster Attack' and 'Zero Days' were organized for large-scale toilet construction to saturate groups of villages with the needed number of toilets in a limited span of time



- 'Diaspora', a social networking website and 'Sendspace', a file sharing website were used to obtain payment sheets in MS-Excel format from gram panchayats and ensure timely release of payments to constructed toilets
- In Harda, ODF attainment is celebrated by the villagers in a 'Swachhta Utsav' when they take a 'Walk of Pride' to visit the now-clean ex-open defecation spots of their village, reward the vigilance team members, honor the new-toilet owners, burning the symbol and vestige of open defecation from the village in a 'Lota Jalao' (Lota - water holder for open defecation) and ends with a signature campaign and unveiling the cleanliness rules of the village including the penal provisions and sanctions against any future defaulters
- In order to encourage self constructed toilets rather than panchayat-built toilets, a Bhai Number One campaign was launched on the occasion of Rakshabandhan festival, which rewarded more than 500 brothers who safeguarded their sisters by gifting them a toilet before tying a 'Rakhi' and made them take pride by sharing with us a 'Selfie with Sister' in front of their newly constructed toilet; after its mention in Man ki Baat, the contest was adopted in many parts of the country
- To promote sustainability, upon request of the district administration, Sahayog Private Dairy is procuring milk from ODF villages at 25 paise extra per liter under the 'holy-cow-incentive-scheme' because in ODF villages the cattle are not in contact with open human feces and hence remain holy
- On the occasion of United Nations International Day for Volunteers aiding social and economic development to attain Millennium Development Goals, ODF Olympics was organized at village, block and district level to encourage and reward the villagers and volunteers from ODF villages only. More than 1100 participants of age groups from 10 to 60+ participated in 20 categories of events, kabaddi, kho-kho, three-legged race, sack race, slow cycle race, sit-up and push-up counts, etc. The fun and frolic was missed by non-ODF villagers, even national and state level players from non-ODF villages were disqualified for participation in ODF Olympics, a positive discrimination to incite non-ODF villages to become ODF
- Swachh Kitchen-Sundar Kitchen (Clean Kitchen-Beautiful Kitchen) competition is being organized among Kitchen sheds of Self-help Groups which are engaged in preparing Mid-Day -Meal in schools situated in ODF villages; 111 schools have applied so far
- Raddi se Samridhhi (Waste to Wealth) programme was an experiment to make soft toys stuffed with sanitized shredded non-biodegradable waste like plastic bags, wrappers, etc; More than 35 women were trained in the trade. Trials of converting biodegradable waste accumulating in a village into fertilizer by using bio-inoculants in 45 days are underway
- Kooda se kalakriti (Trash to Art) exhibition-cum-sales is an opportunity for school and college students and artisans to display the various showpieces and arts made out of waste products which can become a source of livelihood

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