

AFTERWORD

WHAT TOTAL SANITATION CAMPAIGN IS NOT ABOUT

Of late, Total Sanitation Campaign is gathering momentum in all the districts of Orissa. Though there is a general consensus on the importance of sanitation for human development, it is important to understand what the campaign is not about.

Total Sanitation Campaign is not about putting up toilets alone, though latrines in the premises of our houses form one of its key components. The campaign is about improving the overall sanitation situation in our villages. Thus sanitation, and personal and social hygiene have to be an integral part of life in rural areas. Apart from excreta disposal, disposal of solid waste, drainage, proper handling of drinking water, hand washing, etc. are also important components of the Sanitation Campaign.

Sanitation Campaign is certainly not about installing low-cost latrines in households eligible to receive some nominal assistance from Government. All the agencies involved in the campaign must clearly understand that what is being promoted is sanitation habits and proper waste disposal by all households and communities irrespective of their income and social status. In other words; what is desirable is an integrated and holistic approach. Consciously or inadvertently, an impression should not be created that materials for construction of individual household latrines are being distributed among poor families to achieve some target. The campaign can be said to be truly successful when a conducive environment is created, in which sanitary latrines would be a felt need of the people, who would realize that the benefits of having a toilet far outweigh the cost. When it comes to cost, there are different alternatives to choose from, depending on their own purchasing capacity and preference. Thus agencies supplying/selling materials will have to make different types of materials and technical options available to people.

TSC is not about achieving targets at the cost of the processes. All those who are involved in the Total Sanitation Campaign may take note that rapid coverage of villages with sanitation facilities is no doubt one of the goals of the campaign, but in the process what should not be compromised are the demand-driven nature of the initiative, quality assurance at all stages and the availability of different technical options to people.

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FEEDBACK

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"Water and Sanitation is one of the primary drivers of public health"



Lee Jong-wook, Director General,
World Health Organisation