

Title of grant:

Strategic communications support to the Ministry of Urban Development on sanitation

Subtitle (more descriptive title):

Enabling and empowering a lasting System level change through design, implementation, and evaluation of impactful social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) on sanitation.

Name of lead organization:

BBC Media Action

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Grantee location:

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Developing country where the research is being or will be tested: India

Start and end date: 06 October 2016 to 30 September 2018

Grant type: (e.g. Global Challenges Explorations, Reinvent the Toilet Challenge, Other)
Other

Grant size:

USD \$1,396,647

Short description of the project:

While supply issues create obstacles for under-served communities to access safe and sustainable sanitation, there are also many challenges in converting open defecation habits, including the lack of information and understanding of the value of safe sanitation. There is an increased sector wide recognition to work along the entire sanitation value chain to build, use, maintain and treat (BUMT) toilets, in order to create a sustainable change. With this challenge in mind, the BBC Media Action WASH Program provides strategic communication support to the Government of India in implementation of their sanitation communication strategy, focusing on behaviour change, reducing open defecation and improving the management of faecal sludge.

The BBC Media Action strategic approach is on the basis that change occurs at four levels;

- Systems: the political, social and economic institutions and relationships within society that influence how change happens and provide the context for our work. This includes the media, communications and regulatory environment.

- Organisations: commercial, community and public service media organisations, as well as state institutions, civil society organisations and other not-for-profit organisations.
- Practitioners: fellow media professionals, frontline health workers, teachers, etc.
- People: all those who need and inform our work including our audiences and beneficiaries.

The primary objective of this project is to contribute to lasting systems-level change by strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Urban Development to design, develop, implement and evaluate strategic and effective sanitation communications.

Goal(s):

The aim of the project is to provide through Social and Behaviour Change Communication strategy and design an effective and sustainable roadmap to meet the Swachh Bharat Mission to be Open Defecation Free (ODF) by October 2019. The aim is also to synthesize and document learnings from this project for sharing knowledge with sanitation and communication practitioners.

Objectives:

In 2014, the Government of India gave a new direction to its efforts by launching the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM – the Clean India Mission) which sets an ambitious target for India to be free from open defecation by October 2019. But, the urban sanitation behaviours cannot be changed in isolation, without addressing deeply embedded social norms around the need for safe sanitation prevalent across urban communities. Therefore, in order to have a uni-focal strategy to address social norms across India, the objective is to provide additional communications support to the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs and its partners working on urban sanitation.

The secondary objective, therefore, is to contribute to sustained reduction in open defecation at the population-level, by developing strategic communications outputs on consistent toilet use and by providing advisory support to MoHUA.

Focus of this investment:

While India is working to bridge the gaps between sewerage and solid waste management and incentivising construction of toilets for households, it is clear that unless sanitation behaviours among populations change significantly, the safe sanitation targets will remain unattainable. There is a need for a rigorous integrated social and behavior change communications approach to reduce open defecation, impacting the drivers of individual behavior and preferences on toilet usage.

Additionally, there are key gaps in communication capacity at all levels within the Indian government. The MoHUA requires strategic support in order to develop effective communication outputs that address issues around behaviour change for safe sanitation. Our focus areas are in i) integrating an **evidence based communications approach**; (ii) creating a **national SBCC guidelines** on urban sanitation; (iii) identifying and unlocking **potential communication platforms** at the state and city level; (iv) continuous strategy and planning for **of SBCC campaigns** on open defecation.

Our work on capacity strengthening and media development is shaped by a broader understanding and action in five, linked, ways in which we can help support sustainability and contribute to lasting change:

- By supporting sustainable changes in peoples' knowledge, attitudes, norms and behaviour;
- By supporting the development and skills of individual media and communication practitioners;
- By supporting the development of media and communication programming and activities that continue beyond the lifetime of an individual project;
- By contributing to the sustainability of media and communication organisations that are committed and enabled to meet public needs in the long term;
- By supporting media policy, legislation and regulation that enables media to meet public needs.

Research or implementation partners:

BBC Media Action works in collaboration with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD), the existing Project Management Unit (PMU) at MoUD, McCann Erickson (the

creative agency developing mass media content for MoUD) and MSL (MoUD's social media agency), to introduce a scientific, structured and strategic approach to developing and implementing urban sanitation communications.

The program is supported by the collective experience of national and international WASH and communication experts in the BBC Media Action teams in New Delhi and London.

Current state of affairs:

A workshop on the adoption of the national SBCC guidelines at the State/City level will be a step towards a synergetic approach at the Systems level for an integrated communication development process.

The creative output of the second phase of the 'Asli Tarakki' campaign is due for roll out. This was conceived on the basis of an impact evaluation of the first phase of the campaign.

Biggest successes so far:

The effort on urban sanitation, has been focused on refining the objectives of support, defining outputs and KPIs with MoHUA, and establishing a smooth working relationship with Mission Director (SBM) and other stakeholders. A significant achievement last year was BBC Media Action's success in convincing the MoUD to integrate research and learning into government led communication interventions, both to evaluate what worked and what didn't, but also to strengthen future communication design. We have successfully convinced and provided end-to-end technical support to the government in commissioning a research for their flagship communication campaign on urban sanitation. Now, the government is also working with us to build evaluation into their programme design for three future interventions, leveraging significant government funds at the national level.

Additionally, we have been successful in moving their thinking from output based indicators such as cost per reach, to outcome based indicators, including increased knowledge, intent to practice and intent to influence sanitation behaviour of other people. Research and learning, in our experience, is a key entry point with governments for highlighting the gaps in existing communication approach, and establishing the need of strategic communication. This step therefore has the potential of going a long way in providing the impetus for lasting change not only at the national level, but also with state and local administration.

Main challenges / frustration:

The political momentum and associated urgency for implementation on SBM has been a challenge. Sometimes, the government is inclined to severely crunch implementation timelines on outputs and deliverables. To work with this, while we continue to convince key decision makers on the rationale for estimated time on some critical outputs, we also prioritise outputs and solutions where we can build on existing body of work and knowledge for accelerated secondary immersion.

As with any government body without bespoke communications capacity and expertise, the SCU struggled early on to convince government officials about structured and scientific approaches to developing strategic communication outputs. Over time, however, we have successfully introduced systems such as guidelines, how to manuals and research processes.