

Swachh Bharat Mission : A Missed Opportunity for the Indian Economy

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Abstract

On October 2, 2014, the Government of India launched the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) throughout the country as a national movement. The aim of this campaign is to achieve the vision of 'Clean India' by October 2, 2019. This mission, apart from being a cleanliness drive, is certainly going to give a boost to the Indian economy if planned and executed properly. Health, tourism, and rural development are some of the areas expected to be positively impacted by this campaign. The estimated cost of this campaign is ₹ 1.96 trillion. India could channelize investment under SBM and reap its potential economic benefits. These impacts would bring positive change in GDP and employment in India. This paper mainly analyzed the Central government's contribution in funding SBM. The study found that the development under the mission was not able to meet its expectations. It was observed that there is a lack of effort on part of Central and State governments. Even after 3 years of the SBM campaign, the Central government funding has been inadequate. Not even half of the funds have been allocated. The state governments have not utilized the funds allocated to them. The government's expenditure in information and communication is abysmally low. The study found that the state governments were unable to mobilize funds from corporate businesses under CSR. However, the available statistics on physical progress of SBM certainly appeared promising to achieve its vision.

Keywords: Clean India, economy, health, development, budgeting

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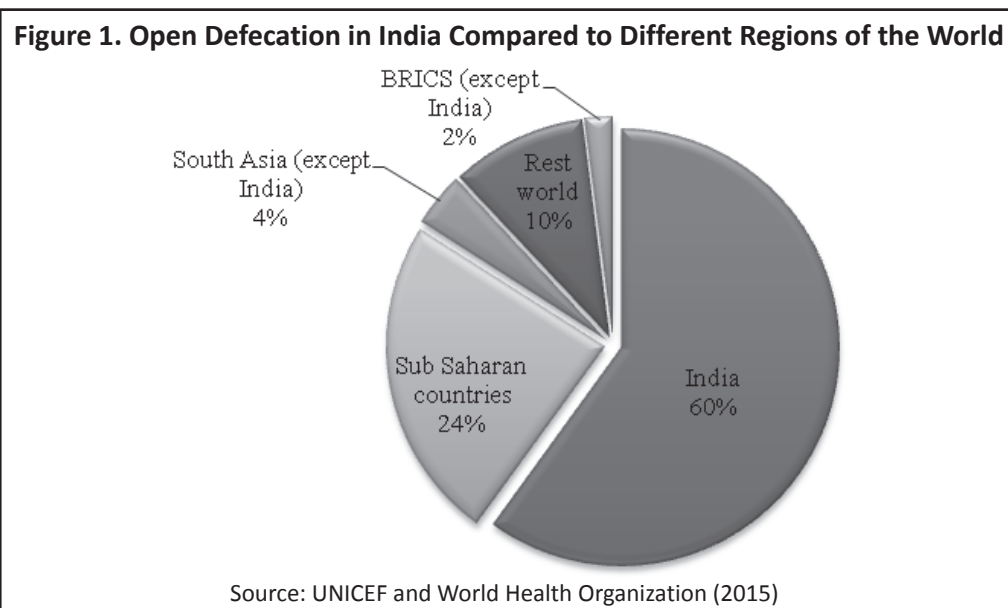
Emphasizing the significance of cleanliness, the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi had said, "Sanitation is more important than independence." Cleanliness has been considered as one of the important factors to judge development in any society. A clean and healthy life helps in refining the culture of a society and reflects in every aspect of life. In due course, it leads towards a higher level of civilization. Therefore, every society in the past has stressed upon the importance of cleanliness.

India's focus on the sanitation and cleanliness policy started in 1980s following international emphasis on sanitation policy. In the period of 1980 to 1990, which was earmarked as the International Water and Sanitation Decade, India launched Central Rural Sanitation Program in 1986, which focused on construction of sanitary toilets for the personal use of population living below the poverty level. The tenet of this program was to improve the quality of rural life. In the next 20 years, different governments restructured this program with some modifications and gave it different names. The Total Sanitation Campaign in 1999 aimed at eradication of open defecation by 2010. The UPA Government renamed the Total Sanitation Campaign to Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan with a plan to step up sanitation facilities in backward areas, especially in rural regions in order to realize the dream of Nirmal Bharat by 2022.

In urban areas, a proper sanitation policy started gaining attention after the Pune Declaration¹ in the year 2004.

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¹A workshop held in Yashada, Pune crafted the urban sanitation policy as Pune Declaration. This led the Ministry to form a task force and the drafting of the National Urban Sanitation Policy, which still guides the sector today.



In the subsequent years, campaigns like International Decade for Action: Water for Life Decade and the International Year of Sanitation in 2008 further guided the government to prioritize the sanitation policy. The government launched the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) in 2005 and the National Urban Sanitation Policy in 2008. Despite such steps taken by governments at different points of time, Nirmal Bharat remained a distant dream. According to Census data, only 9% of Indian households had access to latrine facility in 1991. The corresponding figure rose to 22% and 31% in 2001 and 2011, respectively (Kaul, 2015). According to WHO - UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (2015), 60% of the total population defecating in the open is an Indian (Figure 1). The picture presented here is very abysmal. The idea of becoming a super power without realizing the dream of Nirmal Bharat is impossible.

The present Modi government has given special attention to the sanitation policy and calls it a national development priority. The government launched the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM, henceforth) throughout the country on October 2, 2014 as a national movement. The aim of this campaign is to achieve the vision of 'Clean India' by October 2, 2019 (150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi). It has two sub-missions, namely, Swachh Bharat Mission -Rural (SBM-R, henceforth) and Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U, henceforth). While rural mission comes under the purview of Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, the urban mission comes under the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA, henceforth)². The basic objective is to provide sanitation facilities to every family which includes construction of toilets, solid and liquid waste disposal systems, village cleanliness, and safe and adequate drinking water supply. The mission aims at achieving these objectives at a projected cost of ₹ 1.96 trillion.

As reported by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, since the launch of SBM, the number of people in rural India practicing open defecation has come down from 550 million in 2014 to 320 million in 2017, and the target is to make India open defecation free (henceforth ODF) by October 2, 2019. As on January 1, 2018, the coverage of individual household toilets was 76% in rural areas. Overall, rural areas in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Haryana, Sikkim, Meghalaya, and Kerala, 300 thousand villages, and 300 districts have been

² Swachh Bharat Mission was initiated under Ministry of Urban Development in 2014. On July 7, 2017, the Government of India approved merging of Ministry of Urban Development and Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation and formed Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

declared ODF. States with less than 50% sanitation coverage include Jammu and Kashmir, Bihar, and Odisha (Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, 2017a). Under SBM-U, the coverage of IHHLs increased to 60% in urban areas. States like Gujarat, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra have been declared ODF (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, 2018a).

This mission, apart from being a cleanliness drive, is certainly going to give a boost to Indian economy. Some of the key areas of impact of Swachh Bharat Mission are health, tourism, rural development, and foreign investment. The investment in this mission is certainly going to give a boost to some specific industries. These impacts would bring a positive change in gross domestic product (GDP) and employment in India. Certainly, these positive impacts would be realized only when GOI allocates funds in time, utilizes them efficiently, and delivers the results on ground instead of on paper.

Objectives of the Study

- ↳ To examine the efficacy of Swachh Bharat Mission.
- ↳ To analyze budget of SBM in terms of its allocation.
- ↳ To study the impact of SBM on the Indian economy.

Scope of the Study

With this background, this paper means to discuss the efficacy of SBM and its impact on the economy in particular and the society in general. This paper is divided into four sections. The first section discusses about the vision of SBM-R and SBM-U, their components, and the total cost of funding these missions. The subsequent section gives an overview of the allocation and expenditure of funds under the two sub-missions, that is, SBM-R and SBM-U. This section also discusses the physical progress of this mission in rural and urban areas. This part also highlights the trends in other sources of funds under SBM. The next section discusses the impact of SBM on the Indian economy at micro as well as macro level. The last section discusses the policy formulation and tries to suggest a few steps in order to fulfill the dream of clean India and suggest ways to utilize the funds judiciously so that the economy can realize the potential economic and social benefits from this campaign. The study covers the period from 2014 (2nd October) to 2017.

Swachh Bharat Mission : An Overview

The Swachh Bharat Mission is a national campaign launched by our Prime minister on October 2, 2014 to achieve universal sanitation coverage within 5 years. It has two sub-missions : SBM-R for rural areas and SBM-U for urban areas.

(1) Swachh Bharat Mission - Rural : Its objective is to improve quality of life in rural areas by promoting cleanliness, hygiene, eliminating open defecation, solid and liquid waste management, and creating awareness about health and sanitation linkage.

(i) Mission Components :

- ↳ Startup activities for assessment and preparation.
- ↳ IEC activities for behavior change.
- ↳ Construction of individual household toilets, community toilets.

↳ Setting up of production units for manufacturing hardware.

(ii) Mission Funding : The estimated cost of implementation of SBM-R is approximately ₹ 1.34 trillion. The funds would be generated by the Central government, State governments, private and public sector companies in the form of corporate social responsibility³, contributions in Swachh Bharat Kosh in the form of cess⁴, and loans from multilateral sources like World Bank and IMF (Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, 2017b).

(2) Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban : Its objective is to eliminate open defecation, eradicate manual scavenging, create awareness for behavioral change regarding sanitation practices, capacity building for urban local bodies, and create favorable environment for private participation.

(i) Mission Components :

↳ Construction of individual household toilets, community toilets, public toilets, and conversion of in-sanitary toilets into sanitary ones.

↳ Solid waste management and door to door collection of waste.

↳ IEC activities for behavior change.

↳ Capacity building.

(ii) Mission Funding : The estimated cost of implementation of SBM-U is approximately ₹ 620 billion. The Central government will contribute ₹ 146.23 billion for the mission and State governments' contribution would be ₹ 48.74 billion based on approved funding pattern (75 : 25 cost sharing between Centre and State governments). Rest of the funds would be mobilized by private contributions in the form CSR, funds in Swachh Bharat Kosh collected in the form of cess and individual donations, beneficiary share, and user charges (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, 2018b).

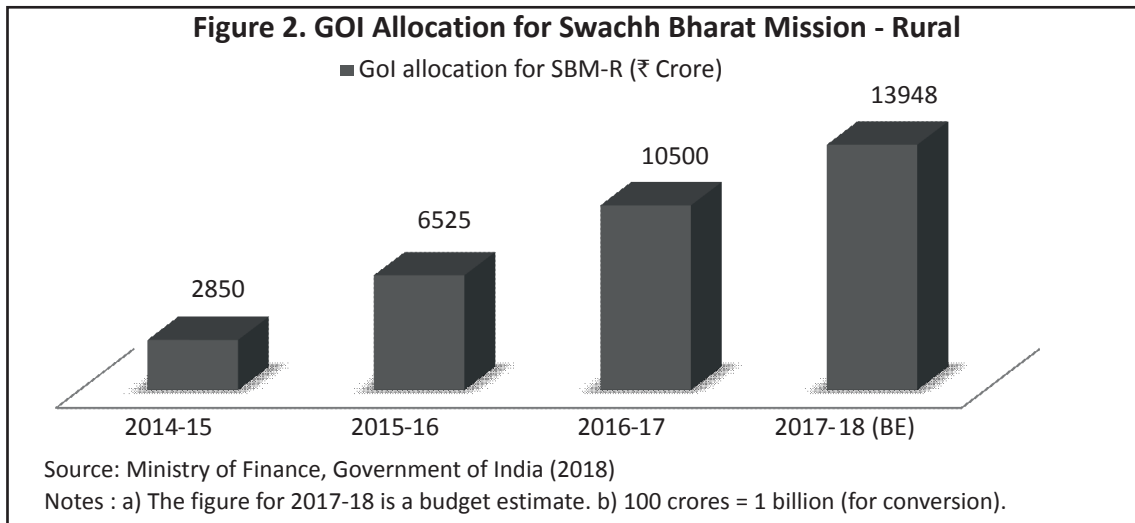
Swachh Bharat Mission : Budget Analysis

This project is estimated at an approximate ₹ 1.96 trillion. Large fraction of this cost is shared by the Central and State governments in the ratio of 75:25. For North Eastern states and Special Category States, the ratio of cost sharing is 90:10⁵. Apart from Central and State governments' share, the funding will be through the contributions to the Swachh Bharat Kosh (funded via Swachh Bharat Cess and individual & corporate donations), through obligations under corporate social responsibility (CSR), and funding assistance from multilateral institutions like World Bank and IMF. The fund under SBM is released by ministries (MDWS for SBM-R and MoHUA for SBM-U) to the State governments. Respective State governments shall release the Central share along with their matching share to the district implementing agencies. The major share of cost is borne by the Central government.

³ Corporate businesses and PSUs can make contribution to Swachh Bharat Kosh or adopt villages or cities to help make them open defecation free under CSR.

⁴ The cess is called Swachh Bharat cess and came into effect from November 15, 2015 at a rate of 0.5% on all taxable services.

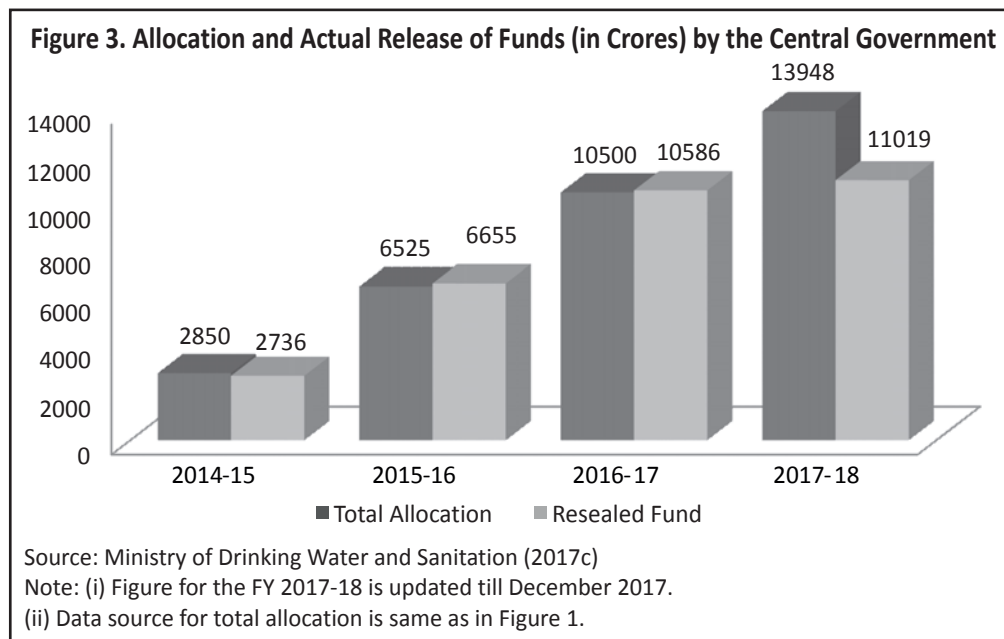
⁵ The funding pattern has been revised with effect from FY 2015-16. The cost is shared between the Centre and States in the ratio of 60 : 40 in most states. For North Eastern and Himalayan states, the sharing ratio between Central and State governments remained in the ratio of 90 : 10. For UTs, the entire cost would be shared by the Centre.



In this section, the focus is on the Central government's financial arrangements for the mission.

(i) Trends in GOI Allocation of Funds and Expenditure Under Swachh Bharat Mission - Rural : Swachh Bharat Mission - Rural is administered by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS, henceforth). The GOI allocation under this mission increased fivefold in the period from 2014-15 to 2017-18. In the financial year 2014-15, the GOI allocated ₹ 28.5 billion to SBM-R which increased to ₹ 139.48 billion in 2017-18 (see Figure 2). The total allocation made by the Central government amounts to ₹ 340 billion till FY 2017-18.

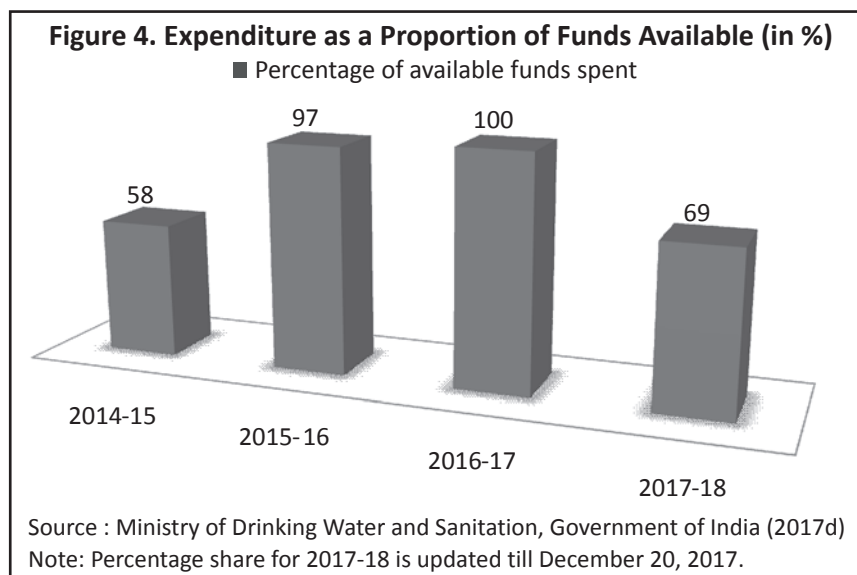
The Figure 2 clearly shows an upward trend in allocation of funds by GOI in the period from 2014-15 to 2017-18. Allocation of funds in a particular year does not necessarily mean that all the allocated funds are actually available for use in that year. There has been a mismatch between the quantum of funds allocated and the actual amount released for a particular financial year. The government has linked release of funds with the performance



of the states in achieving the targets as stated in their respective Annual Implementation Plans⁶. Therefore, it is necessary to look at the amount of funds actually released by the Centre to the state governments. The Figure 3 compares the allocation and actual release of funds under SBM-R.

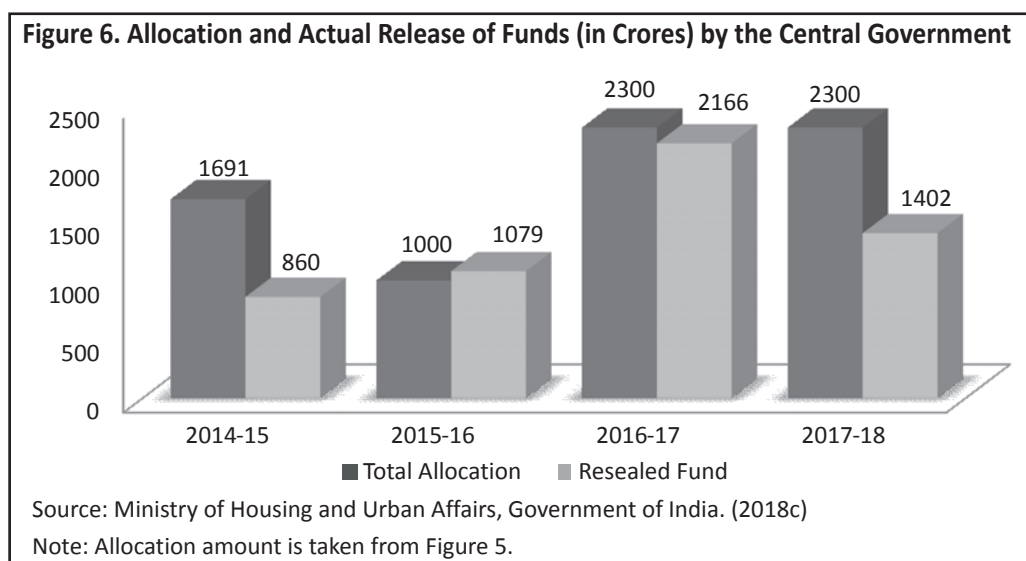
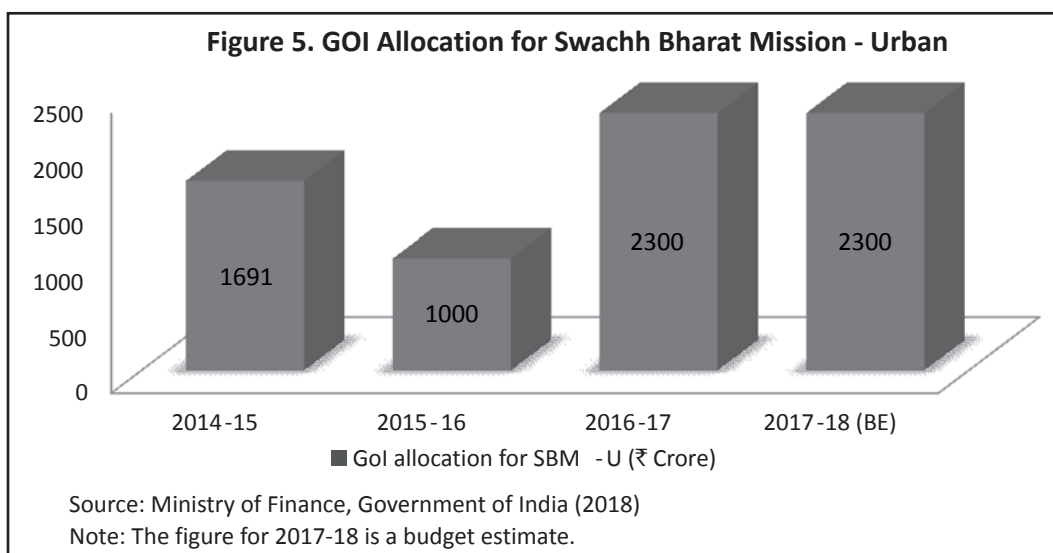
It is interesting to note that the release of funds in the very first year of mission missed its targeted allocation. The Central government sanctioned approximately 96% of its total allocation in the year 2014-15. However, the next 2 years witnessed an increase in allocation and release of funds as well. The government sanctioned more funds than what was actually allocated. In 2015-16, the government released 102% of total allocation and the figure marginally dropped to 101% in 2016-17. In the financial year 2017-18, the government has already released 79% of its total allocated funds by the end of the third quarter of this financial year.

Once the Central government's share is released to the state governments, the funds shall be released to the districts within 15 days. The district is the implementing unit of this mission and thus, the district implementing agency transfers funds to gram panchayats and other agencies for utilization. After the release of funds to the state, it is important to look at the implementation and utilization of the funds transferred. The expenditure performance shows that in the year 2014-15, only 58% of the total funds available were spent. The next two years witnessed a significant increase in expenditure of funds. The expenditure as a proportion of funds available increased to 97% in 2015-16 and further increased to 100% in 2016-17. In the year 2017-18, 69% of the funds were already spent by the third quarter of the financial year (see Figure 4).



The SBM MIS Report (2017c) showed that while some states have spent more than the funds available with them, few have not even spent their available funds. In the year 2016-17, states like Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan spent from their own resources. States like Bihar, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh spent less. It is important to note that even after 3 years of the SBM campaign, the Central government funding has been inadequate. The state governments have not utilized the funds.

⁶ Annual Implementation Plan (AIPs) is prepared by the state governments after consolidating district AIPs. The district AIP is prepared by consulting gram panchayats. These gram panchayats' plans are consolidated into Block Implementation Plans and further into DIPs. MDWS allocates funds based on AIPs of States. The release of funds to the state is incentivized based on performance.



(ii) Trends in GOI Allocation of Funds and Expenditure under Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban : The Swachh Bharat Mission - Urban is administered by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India. This program targets universal sanitation coverage in urban areas. The total project cost is estimated at ₹ 620.09 billion, of which GOI's share is to be ₹ 147.87 billion. In FY 2017-18, GOI allocated ₹ 23 billion to SBM-U, which is same as the allocation for the year 2016-17. But as compared to the year 2015-16, this allocation has actually more than doubled. The total cost of the scheme is estimated at ₹ 620.09 billion rupees, of which GOI's share is ₹ 147.87 billion rupees. By FY 2017-18, 4 years into the scheme, ₹ 72.91 billion, amounting to 49 % of GOI's total share, has been allocated to the states by the Centre (Figure 5).

According to the data available at SBM-U website, the release of funds by GOI has been variable. In FY 2014 - 15, GOI released 51% of its allocation to states. In FY 2015-16, whilst allocations decreased, the release of funds improved and over 100% of total GOI allocations were released. FY 2016 -17 saw a significant improvement in the fund allocation. Allocation for FY 2016-17 accounted for 41% of all releases since the launch of the mission. In the FY 2017-18, 61% of allocated funds were released by the Centre for the states till January 1, 2018 (Figure 6).

However, there exists significant state wise variations in release of funds made under SBM-U. Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh received 84%, 61%, and 55% of total mission allocations till January 1, 2018, respectively ; whereas, states like Uttar Pradesh and Assam only received 25% and 7% funds, respectively (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, 2018c).

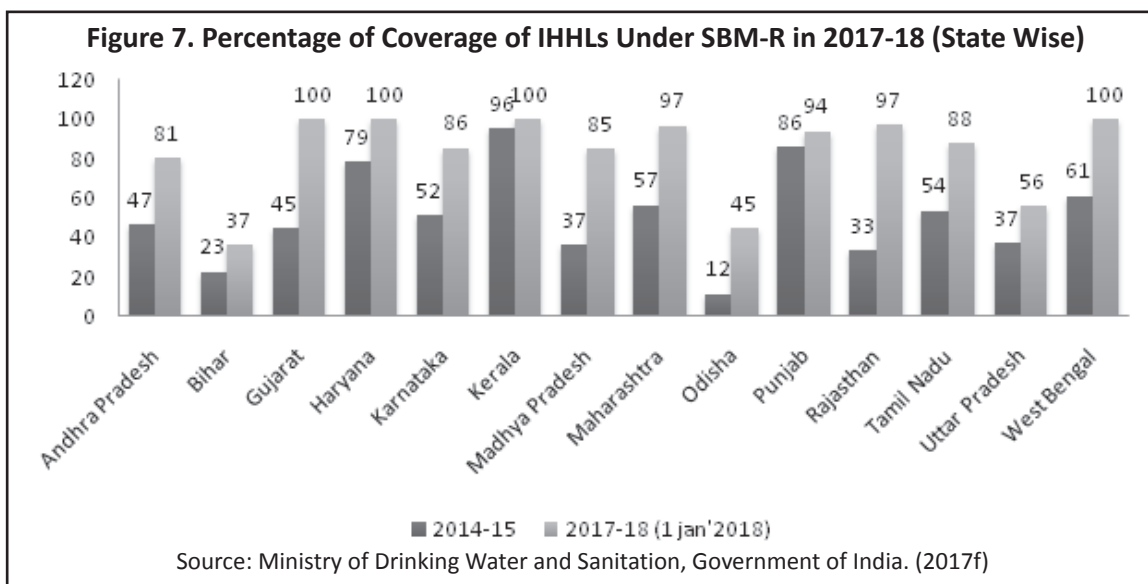
(iii) Other Sources of Funding for SBM : Apart from Central and State government's contribution, the funds would be generated by private and public sector companies in the form of corporate social responsibility, contributions in Swachh Bharat Kosh in the form of cess, and loans from multilateral sources like World Bank and IMF. The World Bank agreed to financially support SBM-R and would provide loans to state governments to the tune of ₹ 90 billion based on their performance towards achieving the goals of SBM.

Rajagopala (2017) pointed that as on January 10, 2017, the World Bank was yet to release funds for this mission. It is reported that the government collected ₹ 164 billion as Swachh Bharat cess in the last 2 years, while only 75% of this fund has been transferred to the Swachh Bharat Kosh. Thakur (2017) pointed out that 25% of the total Swachh Bharat cess had not reached the dedicated fund. The individual and corporate donations (public and private corporates) under Swachh Bharat Kosh has been pretty low. Total donations to SBK year wise are : ₹ 1.59 billion in 2014-15, ₹ 2.53 billion in 2015-16, ₹ 2.45 billion in 2016-17, and ₹ 37.8 million till July 13, 2017 (Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, 2017e).

Physical Progress of Swachh Bharat Mission

According to the SBM-G dashboard, as on January 1, 2018 (Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Government of India, 2017f), over 55 million IHHLs had been built. The rapid rate of construction has actually doubled the overall coverage of sanitary toilets within 3 years of its implementation. The overall coverage of household toilets stood at 75.43% in rural areas as on January 1, 2018. The corresponding figure stood at 38.7% on October 2, 2014. It reported that over 3 lakhs villages, 300 districts, and 9 states were open defecation free as on January 1, 2018.

The state-level analysis shows significant difference in performance of states in achieving their targets (Figure 7). Sikkim became the first state to declare itself open defecation free in January 2016, followed by



Himachal Pradesh in October 2016, and Kerala in November 2016. States like Gujarat, Haryana, Kerala, West Bengal, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra have done remarkably well in achieving their targets, while states like Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Odisha have performed below expectations.

According to the SBM-U dashboard, as on 1 January, 2018, over 4 million IHHLs and over 0.2 million community toilets had been built in urban areas (Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India, 2018a). It reported that approximately 1500 cities were open defecation free as on January 1, 2018. Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh became the first states to be open defecation free in urban areas followed by Maharashtra.

The available statistics on physical progress of SBM certainly looks promising to achieve its vision. But many independent organizations and think tanks question these statistics. According to Aggarwal and Kapur (2017), the process of verifying the status of states for ODF under SBM is not standardized since states are allowed to define their own verification processes. At the same time, not more than 60% villages which declared themselves ODF have been verified. The study also highlighted that the construction of toilets does not mean using of toilets. Since little less than 12% had been spent on IEC, not many efforts have been put by the government institutions to bring in behavior change among the masses. However, Swachh Survekshan Gramin 2017 Survey conducted by Quality Control of India indicated that 90% of rural households which have access to toilets use them (Aggarwal & Kapur, 2017).

Impact of Swachh Bharat Mission on the Indian Economy

According to WHO, the Indian government has to bear an additional cost of ₹ 6500 per person due to lack of cleanliness and hygiene. This mission would make a significant impact on public health and in safeguarding income of the poor, ultimately contributing to the national economy (Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, 2015). India can certainly channelize the investment under SBM and reap its potential economic benefits. Timely allocation and utilization of funds can bring significant change in the development process. Many experts advocated the idea that this campaign will have a certain impact on few industries (related to the construction sector), health sector, tourism, rural development, and foreign direct investment. The impact will bring positive change in GDP and employment in our country.

A recent report prepared by the Centre for Policy Research and Confederation of Indian Industries estimated the cost of funding SBM. The cost included capital expenditure needed to create assets till the end of this mission, that is, 2019 and operational and maintenance cost for these assets for a period of 10 years. The physical quantities needed to create and maintain these assets were calculated at current market prices. The estimated costs for implementing SBM, including capital expenditure till 2019, and operational and management expenditure for 10 years is approximately ₹ 8.93 trillion. The total capital expenditure for Swachh Bharat Mission is estimated to be ₹ 3.43 trillion and operational expenditure is ₹ 5.49 trillion (Dasgupta et al., 2015).

(1) Impact on the Industrial Sector : The main components of SBM includes construction of sanitary toilets, their maintenance, and knowledge sharing through investment in IEC, etc. The capital and operational expenditure in order to achieve the targets is going to have diverse effect on industries like construction industries, ICT based industries, equipment suppliers like sanitary ware industries, and banking and financial institutions as well. Building material like bricks, sand, steel, and cement will be required in big quantities. The demand for building material goods is certainly going to give a boost to the building material industry. It is estimated that unorganized firms (brick kilns and sand businesses) might witness a growth of 12% to 15% per annum and organized firms producing steel and cement might grow at 3% to 10% per annum for the next 5 years (Dasgupta et al., 2015). SBM will also have a positive impact on the sanitary ware market and firms producing FMCGs.

Under SBM, some contribution has to come from households towards construction of IHHLs. It was estimated by CPR that ₹ 68 thousand crore should be contributed by the households. If a fraction of households resort to microfinance institutions for loans, the microfinance sector is certainly going to witness growth in the coming years.

(2) Impact on Employment : Most of the sectors involved under SBM are labor intensive ; be it the construction sector, building material industries, sanitary ware firms, etc. These sectors would create job opportunities in labor markets. According to the estimation as suggested by Dasgupta et al. (2015), 1.6 billion person-days are required only to construct sanitary toilets. Apart from construction activities, investment in IEC and knowledge services will create job opportunities for skilled workers. The operational and management service providers will also have better job opportunities under SBM.

(3) Impact on Gross Domestic Product : According to the Water and Sanitation Program (2011) report, *The Economic Impacts of Inadequate Sanitation in India*, it was estimated that the economic costs of impact on health and cost of impact on tourism due to lack of sanitation and hygiene amounted to ₹ 1.75 trillion and ₹ 12 billion, respectively in 2006. The total economic loss amounted to 6.4% of the GDP in that year. It is estimated that positive intervention in sanitation and hygiene could have prevented 0.35 million deaths and 338 million cases of different diseases in 2006. This could have led to the potential gain of 3.9% of GDP in 2006 (Water and Sanitation Program, 2011).

One of the biggest limitations to promote tourism in India is cleanliness because foreign tourists are particular about hygiene and cleanliness. A classic example is Singapore. The Clean India campaign is certainly a great step in order to improve the overall condition of sanitation and hygiene in the country. The true achievement of this mission will certainly boost the GDP. At the same time, the amount of capital and operational expenditure is significant, and it was estimated by Dasgupta et al. (2015) that the investment under capital and operational expenditure might add to the growth of GDP by 0.7% per annum in the next 5 years.

Apart from its economic benefits, the country would certainly achieve some social objectives like eradication of manual scavenging, social exclusion, and improvement in infant mortality. Kumar and Rajendran (2016) asserted that the government schools in Tamil Nadu lack proper sanitation facilities. This has been common in many states and this is the reason for the high drop out of girl students from schools. SBM will certainly improve the situation. The socioeconomic benefits will help the country to achieve its Millennium Development Goals in the near future.

Research and Policy Implications

The paper presents a comprehensive look of Swachh Bharat Mission's progress in terms of its financing and physical progress in the last three and a half years. The budget outlays analyzed in this paper clearly highlight the fact that funds allocated for this mission by the government are not sufficient, and therefore, private participation is important through CSR initiatives or investments made under the PPP model. This study also points that the state governments have not utilized the funds properly and ,therefore, there is a clear need for the Central government to supervise the work and funds to be allocated on the basis of performance of states. There is a greater need for participation from local institutions, self-help groups, NGOs, and other bodies to bring awareness among people and convey to them about the benefits of sanitation. The government must utilize the funds under information and communication for this mission. The success of this mission lies not only in building toilets, but bringing behavioral changes in people and make them aware about the benefits of sanitation.

Conclusion

The importance of sanitation and hygiene in preventing economic losses of the country cannot be overlooked. The implementation of the Swachh Bharat Mission in true spirit will certainly help the country to reap potential gains. However, it is already more than 3 years of this campaign, and the government's efforts show a grim picture. The fund allocation has been inadequate. The expenditure of these funds by state governments shows the lack of intent and competency of the governments. The government's expenditure in information and communication is abysmally low and has to be increased rapidly. Not even half of the total funds actually allocated for this campaign have been spent. The implementation lag might have some bearing on the effectiveness of this mission. It is also interesting to note that while half of the total allocated funds are not even released, the IHHL coverage has been increasing rapidly. This compels one to think that the verification process by state governments for a region to become ODF needs a serious check. The Centre must bring standardized verification procedures for all states. The Central and state governments must try to mobilize funds from corporate businesses and try to implement the PPP model, which will attract private investment and can provide services at cheaper rates, which will help vulnerable sections of the society. It might not be possible to meet the targets set under SBM by 2019. However, a sincere effort by each stakeholder will certainly help India realize its dream of Clean India and translate into improved human development indicators for the country.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

The study only analyzes the contribution of the Central government in funding the Swachh Bharat Mission. The study does not take into account the role of state governments and other corporate businesses to support the funding of this mission. At the same time, the data used in this study is taken from government portals on Swachh Bharat Mission, and many organizations have questioned the data on physical progress of this mission. A primary study would certainly give a clear picture of the mission's achievement. The time period analyzed to study the efficacy of SBM is for 3 years, and 2 years are still left to fulfill this mission. A sincere effort by each stakeholder in the coming days would certainly improve the picture.

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