

ABSTRACT

Sanitation is one of India's major challenges. Solutions will require installation of adequate infrastructure and adoption of improved behaviors and practices. This paper qualitatively examines the author's year long involvement with a project designed to provide household latrines and awareness of healthy personal hygiene in a rural displaced Bengali community in Sindhanur Taluk in Karnataka, India. The project provides a case study for potential replication in other rural areas. However, several challenges and opportunities in future interventions were observed that could lead to improvement of future applications of this approach. The project allowed the author to observe the use and effectiveness of subsidies, how attitudes towards property ownership can affect attitudes towards sanitation, and different approaches to vest a community in a sanitation project. The approaches in vesting the community included giving a community leader project responsibilities, ensuring the community was well informed, ensuring that community members gave either money or in kind labor or materials for their toilets. Challenges posed by language barriers, staff schedules and difficulties in the community adopting the standard toilet design as their own are discussed. Potential solutions to these challenges as well as ideas on improving subsidies and expanding ideas of property ownership are briefly reviewed.