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Monitoring Sanitation Campaigns: Targets, Reporting and Realism

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About The Sanitation Learning Hub

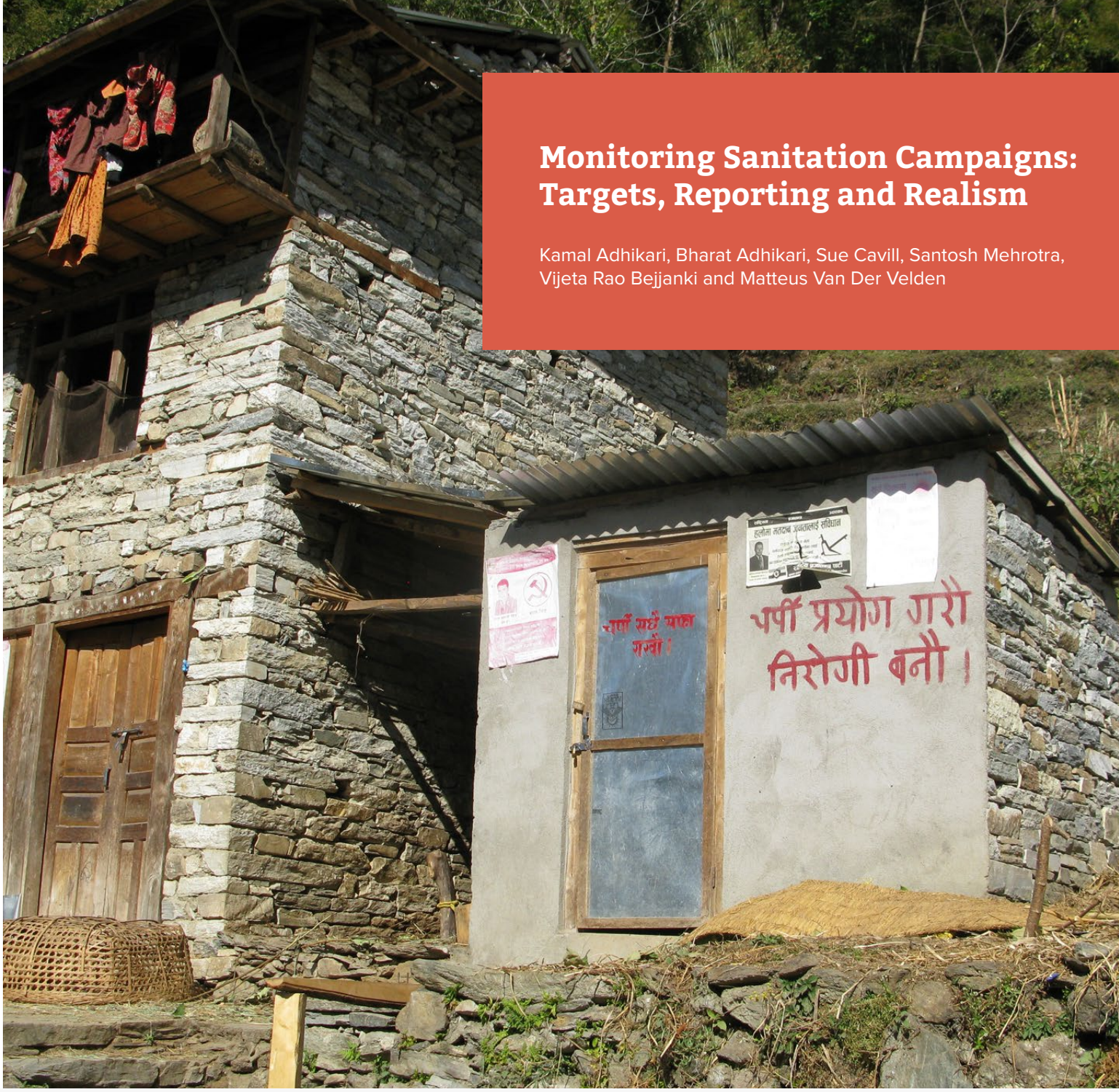
For over ten years, IDS's Sanitation Learning Hub (SLH, previously the CLTS Knowledge Hub) has been supporting learning and sharing across the international sanitation and hygiene (S&H) sector. The SLH uses innovative participatory approaches to engage with both practitioners, policy-makers and the communities they wish to serve. We believe that achieving safely managed sanitation and hygiene for all by 2030 requires timely, relevant and actionable learning. The speed of implementation and change needed means that rapidly learning about what is needed, what works and what does not, filling gaps in knowledge, and finding answers that provide practical ideas for policy and practice, can have exceptionally widespread impact. Our mission is to enable the S&H sector to innovate, adapt and collaborate in a rapidly evolving landscape, feeding learning into policies and practice. Our vision is that everyone is able to realise their right to safely managed sanitation and hygiene, making sure no one is left behind in the drive to end open defecation for good.

Photo credits

Front cover: Establishment of Total Sanitation Indicators, Sitapur Dhara Community in Ward No 2 of Sitganga Municipality, Arghakhanchi District
Credit: Mr. Madan Kumar Malla, UN Habitat Nepal

This page: Household toilet in earthquake affected Sindhupalcho wk District, Nepal
Credit: Mr. Madan Kumar Malla, UN Habitat Nepal

Next page: One House One Toilet, Bajura District, Nepal
Credit: Mr. Madan Kumar Malla, UN Habitat Nepal



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Acronyms

CBO	Community-based organisation
CLTS	Community-led total sanitation
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MICS	Multiple indicator cluster surveys
MIS	Management information system
NARSS	National Annual Sanitation Survey (India)
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSHCC	National Sanitation and Hygiene Coordination Committee (Nepal)
NSHSC	National Sanitation and Hygiene Steering Committee (Nepal)
NSS	National Sample Survey (India)
ODF	Open defecation free
RICE	Research Institute for Compassionate Economics
SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission (India)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SMS	Short message service
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VDC	Village development committee
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WASH-CCs	WASH Coordination Committees (Nepal)

Definitions

Sanitation campaign
A campaign is a coordinated series of activities aimed at attaining the goal of ODF status and higher levels of sanitation and hygiene services. Campaigns often have clear deliverables, are highly organised and take place in a predefined timeframe.

Target
Progress to be reported against targets (such as resources or populations).

Monitoring
Assesses and documents progress towards the end goal of an ODF community.

Natural Leaders
Natural Leaders are community leaders that emerge through the CLTS process and help lead the drive towards ODF status at the local level.

Reporting
Data is typically collated by the facilitating agency either for project level monitoring or for feeding into a larger management information system (MIS) on CLTS or wider sanitation aspects for the district, region or country. Reporting is usually provided in the form of checklists.

Verification
Verification is the process of assessing ODF status and hygiene behaviour change in a community for the purposes of certification.

Certification
Certification is the official recognition resulting from the full achievement of ODF status and other related conditions.

Community-led total sanitation
A methodology used to facilitate communities to conduct their own appraisal and analysis of open defecation and take their own action to become ODF.

1. Introduction

Many governments in Asia and Africa have set ambitious target dates for their countries becoming open defecation free (ODF). Some have recently concluded national sanitation campaigns; a number of countries have campaigns underway; while others are in the conceptualising and planning process. Monitoring and reporting results is one of the key challenges associated with these campaigns. This *Frontiers of Sanitation* presents lessons learnt to date to inform ongoing and future government campaigns intended to end open defecation and improve access to safely managed sanitation. Firstly, we discuss campaigns, targets, monitoring, reporting, and verification arrangements, showing how these processes can be used to increase the credibility of national declarations and strengthen campaigns to respond to challenges. Secondly, we present case studies from India[1] and Nepal,[2] providing campaign-specific details from two recently declared ODF countries.

2. Methods

This *Frontiers* is based on a global scan of national sanitation campaigns. We conducted a literature search to identify both published and unpublished studies (from the 1970s to date) using the terms 'sanitation; campaign; national; government-led'. We checked databases as well as individual journals. To find unpublished material and relevant programme documents, we also checked the websites of various ministries/secretaries and implementation agencies. We performed the search in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. India and Nepal were selected as case studies as both have declared themselves ODF in the recent past. We draw on these case studies throughout, as well as providing more specific detail in section 10.

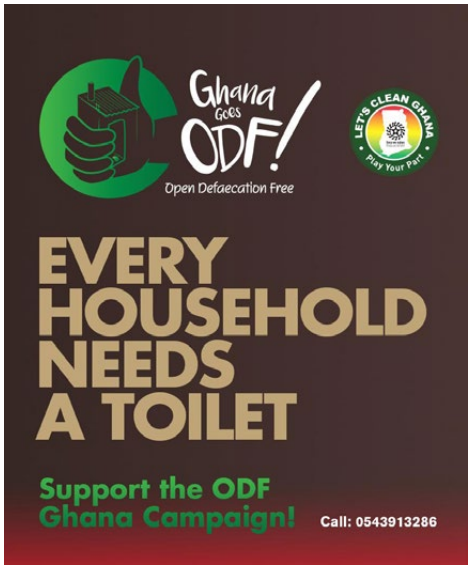
1 Santosh Mehrotra (2021) Monitoring India's National Sanitation Campaign (2014–2020).
2 Kamal Adhikari and Bharat Adhikari (2021) Nepal Sanitation Movement Lessons Learnt on Targets and Monitoring.

3. National sanitation campaigns

Campaigns, combined with high levels of enforcement and the introduction of sanctions for not constructing and using toilets, have played a role in decreasing open defecation rates. Most focus on behaviours encouraging toilet use and/or handwashing with soap. Many governments base their national campaigns on community-led total sanitation (CLTS) with the goal of changing mindsets towards ending open defecation. Campaigns aim to educate, sensitise and encourage the target audiences to change their behaviour to make using a toilet an automatic and positive behaviour as well as a social norm.

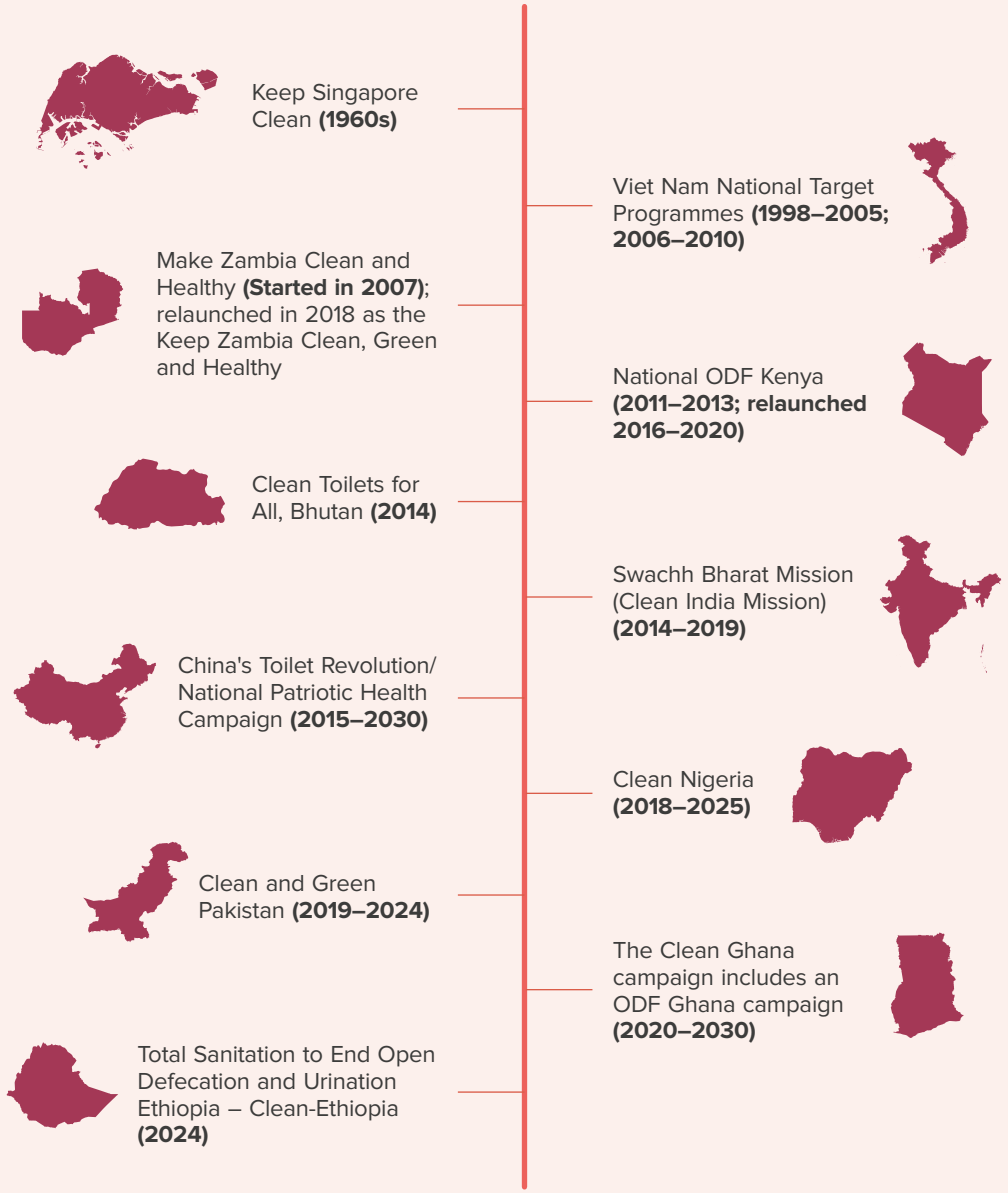
3.1 Campaign objectives

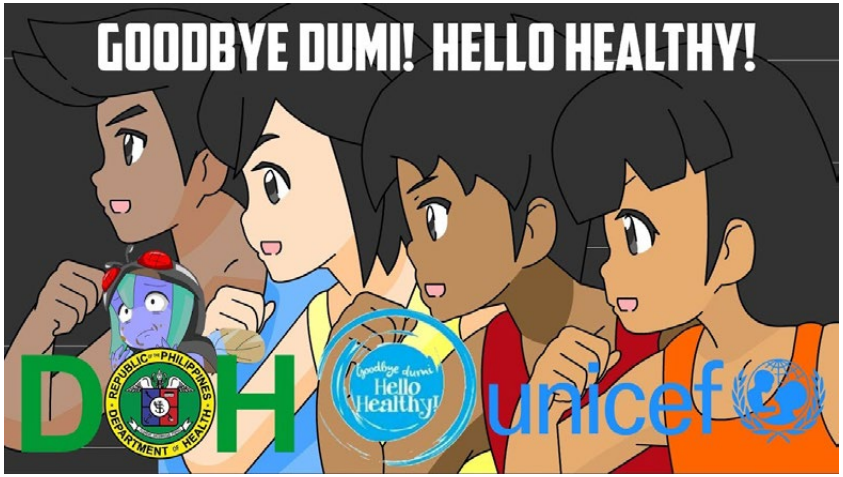
The campaign's long-term objectives are to either stop open defecation or upgrade toilets. The key objectives vary slightly between countries; many focus on health and cleanliness, drawing on ideas of patriotism. Table 1 provides examples of campaign names and dates and associated themes.



The Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development as well as other partners launched the 'Open Defecation Free' (ODF) Campaign in Ghana, as part of the Clean Ghana Campaign

Table 1. Timeline of selected campaigns





"Goodbye, Dumi! Hello, Healthy!" campaign supports the Zero Open Defecation (ZOD) Program of the Department of Health in the Philippines

3.2 Campaign strategies

Campaigns should be data-led, with formative research conducted to understand the key motivations for open defecation (Czerniewska et al. 2019; Aunger et al., 2017). Creative material to promote behavioural change may then be commissioned. Messages are expected to influence behaviours and attitudes towards open defecation and upgrading sanitation. Campaigns usually have theme and a slogan (e.g. Tanzania's 'Nipo Tayari' ['I am ready'] linking toilet promotion and housing [Czerniewska et al. 2019], and Nepal's 'I feel pride having toilet in my home', promoting dignity as a route to ending open defecation). Campaigns often use multiple channels, including community meetings, triggerings, television, radio, social media, newspapers, loudspeaker announcements, outdoor advertising, household visits, local government meetings and rallies. The success of a campaign largely relies on the collaboration of multi-sector stakeholders.

3.3 Implementation arrangements

In general, national sanitation campaigns are coordinated by the ministry responsible for sanitation together with local governments. Development partners provide technical and/or monitoring assistance and additional funding; non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs) deliver activities through their existing sanitation and hygiene programmes, and the private sector provide contractors for marketing, materials, and expertise. Table 2 sets out the roles keys actors have played in campaigns to date.

Table 2. Key actors and roles in campaigns

Actor	Roles
Local governments in the districts/regions	Planning and overseeing the implementation of the campaign CLTS training and triggering Masonry training School hygiene promotion Monitoring/follow-up/ supervision of the lower levels (wards and villages)
NGOs/CBOs/CSOs	Undertaking and supporting the local government with activities listed above Developing promotional materials and delivering activities
Media	Print, radio, TV and social media
Development partners	Financing, technical assistance, and coordination assistance
Marketing agencies	Development and testing of promotional messages and materials Experiential events Media production and placement Mason sales support
Sector ministry and other development partners	Coordination of the campaign Production, pre-testing, and distribution of training materials Budget transfers to local governments National monitoring and evaluation

Source: Developed from Tanzania's 'Nipo Tayari' Campaign materials

3.4 ODF declaration protocols

To plan a campaign it is also necessary to clarify definitions of ODF status and create guidance on processes for monitoring, verification and certification. Certification is official recognition of the full achievement of ODF status and other related conditions. Both internal (by the government/ implementing agency and community) and external (by independent bodies) verification processes are recommended. Once each community, up to the highest sub-national administrative unit, becomes ODF then it is reasonable to declare the whole country ODF. In Nepal and India, the national declaration was made on the basis that all districts (Nepal) or states/union territories (India) had been declared ODF.

Internal verification

Verification tools include (baseline) surveys and spot-checks, CLTS guidelines and manuals, mobile-to-web survey, GPS data, household interviews, field observation, and toilet photographs.

When a village considers itself ODF, it requests formal verification from the government. Internal verification is needed to ensure community ODF declaration is accurate and reliable. Certification is the final stage in the process, where the ministry may get involved, although not for each community. Multi-sectoral teams may do random checks on communities declared to be ODF to assess whether everyone uses a toilet and whether there is any evidence of open defecation. In some countries a single verification visit by staff from the next administrative level (e.g. ward level) and neighbouring villages is necessary for certification. In other countries, ODF status has to be sustained for a period after verification, e.g. two months in Kenya, three months in Ethiopia, and six months in Nigeria before a final certification visit to determine sustainability (Pasteur 2017).

External verification

In some cases data from government monitoring systems may not be reliable or robust or (inadvertently) over-report results. Third party verification has been used to reduce the risk of misreporting and increase transparency. External verification could be carried out by the government (from a different ministry), NGO staff, researchers, consultants, media, or other officials or volunteers. Techniques to externally verify results include random spot checks on household toilets in randomly selected communities. Any discrepancies would trigger a wider check. Third party verification in Kenya was carried out through NGOs, although bringing in external agents from other districts can be time consuming and has cost implications. Organisations like UNICEF have paid for a third party verifier to monitor the quality of the CLTS process as well as the outcome in Ghana and Pakistan (Pasteur 2017). In India, development partners run yearly independent verification mechanisms to assess slippage of the ODF status and enable mitigation measures if this is identified.

Recommendations for setting up ODF campaigns and declaration systems
Monitoring arrangements for sanitation campaigns must be context specific and relative to scale of action, based on the national definitions of ODF status, and include monitoring the use of toilets.
The sum of credible declarations at lower administrative levels should lead logically to a national ODF-status declaration. A country-wide ODF-status declaration should be used as a milestone (of a campaign), and not the end of the journey of a country towards safely managed sanitation for all. The fact that ODF status is not the ultimate goal should be communicated at the onset of the campaign.
The ministry in charge of the campaign should not be the one in charge of monitoring and reporting results.
Learning by doing and learning exchanges highlight the importance of well-synced, integrated monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems.
Documentation of the forerunners experience' is key to developing a science for sanitation campaigns.
Proper planning, budgeting, and protocols for roles/responsibilities of different levels/actors is necessary, as is balance between internal and external verification.
Campaigns can promote constructive competition between administrative areas while maximising the realisation of sustained outcomes towards near universal level.
Keep verifications manageable for the different administrative levels.

4. Target setting

Sanitation campaigns feature a series of organised actions that are carried out to push for collective behaviour changes on a nationwide scale. The targets for the campaign typically include:

- An outcome – i.e. progress to eradicate open defecation.
- A timeframe – i.e. by a deadline.
- Process-related targets – i.e. the number of people to be reached by the campaign.

Challenges for target setting
Setting a goal for achieving ODF status by a certain date creates a situation where the target is either met or not met. Pass/fail targets can be counter-productive if their achievement is the ultimate aim. If the wrong targets are selected, monitoring can't solve the problem.
Hitting a numerical target like 100 per cent toilet coverage leads to missing the real point of the campaign. It monitors what is easy to measure, rather than what is important, such as toilet use.
If targets are set too high (with tight timelines) it creates stress and de-motivation, while if too low it can lead to complacency. Unrealistic deadlines can reduce the quality of the outcomes and unintended negative behaviours, such as aggression and abuse being used to achieve targets.
Campaigns can be supply-driven with a lack of attention to sustainability of infrastructure and behaviour change.
Targets can provoke disinformation, including either distortion of the data or distorting the way the campaign is run.
Short timeframes pose a risk of negative implications for behaviour change and addressing those left behind.

4.1 Output/outcome targets

Monitoring outputs and outcomes – progress monitoring – assesses movement towards the achievement of ODF status within communities, regions and nations. Campaigns often set targets for ODF status or levels of sanitation coverage. Although the definition of being ODF and guidance on processes for monitoring, verification and certification vary between countries, most refer to absence of open defecation in the environment. Being ODF often refers to 100 per cent use of improved sanitation, although some countries are declared to be ODF if households are sharing.

In the past, supply-driven sanitation campaigns have set targets for outputs such as latrine construction, and consequently monitored the budgets expended and numbers of facilities built. For example:

- In the 1990s a sanitation campaign was launched in Bhutan, which resulted by 2000 in 'almost 100 per cent latrine coverage'. Despite the 'toilet revolution', high coverage has reportedly not led to high use.
- Similarly, in 2012, the Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan in India targeted accelerated toilet construction and cash subsidies for household latrines, rather than behaviour change. The achievement was monitored purely in terms of toilets constructed, not their uptake and use.

Demand-led campaigns have monitored performance in terms of toilet access and usage and in the creation of ODF communities. For instance, in Bangladesh, between 2003 and 2006, the government reached all parts of the country with a national sanitation campaign that was targeted to 'achieve 100 per cent sanitation coverage and stop open defecation in rural areas by 2010' (Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives 2005).

4.2 Timeframe targets

Timeframes for campaigns vary between countries, although many opt for a 4–5 year time frame for achieving ODF status. The length of these campaign is often linked to a national development or economic plan or an election cycle or current sanitation coverage (baseline data). Countries also adopt the time horizon of the SDG targets for their campaigns, with ODF status to be achieved by 2025 as a milestone to achieving SDG targets. A 5- or more year campaign is a long time to sustain momentum. Yet, rushed campaign timelines can mean the results are unsustainable as the deadline creates incentives to cut corners, speed up the process, or misreport. In some places campaign timeframes have been extended, for instance the ODF Kenya 2020 campaign was relaunched to rejuvenate and energise the

players. The Nepalese campaign was initially supposed to run for seven years but continued for nine due to the impact of earthquakes and floods. In some cases new campaigns are launched when the original deadlines have been missed (India, Indonesia).

There is some debate on whether campaigns will be more successful if they set targets that are realistic and will result in sustainable household-level change, or whether success depends on setting near 'unachievable' goals (see box). Setting hard to reach targets can mobilise government and civil society to attain them but, on the other hand, fear of failure can also lead to perverse incentives to forge data and inflate achievements. This presents a risk that ODF status might be claimed when sanitation access is below 100 per cent, and open defecation is still rampant.

Example box: Believe the impossible.

'A key driver of the success of the programme (launched in 2014) was the "big hairy audacious goal" to make India "open defaecation free" by 2 October 2019. Standard development programmes tend to be conservative, setting less risky, but more plausible, goals. For example in 2016, the Tanzanian government set a target of 85 per cent coverage with improved toilets by 2030. However, such targets neither provide a compelling vision nor a sense of urgency. SBM [Swachh Bharat Mission] shows other countries that ambitious plans for sanitation transformation can galvanise behaviour change in institutions'

Curtis, V. (2019) 'Explaining the outcomes of the 'Clean India' campaign: institutional behaviour and sanitation transformation in India' BMJ Global Health

4.3 Process-related targets

Process monitoring, usually carried out by government or NGOs, assesses the quality and effectiveness of the sanitation intervention, such as the facilitation style, engagement of Natural Leaders, regularity and extent of follow-up, use of songs and slogans, and the emergence of community sanctions. Process monitoring also includes the tracking of financial resources.

Process-related indicators typically include:

- *Number of campaign meetings held:* at regional and/or district level
- *Number of articles mentioning the national campaign in the media* as well as on the internet, Facebook shares, and tweeted article.
- *Press briefings held:* briefing packs about the campaign for national or local press conferences.
- *Number of radio spots:* including jingles as well as engaging celebrities and leaders speaking about the campaign on radio talk shows.
- *Number of TV spots:* adverts, video clips, TV programmes, news items about the campaign.
- *Number of people reached by media coverage* including radio, television, newspaper, SMS messages, social media, campaign website and others.
- *Number of speeches delivered* by key political figures, and during other occasions like rallies.
- *Number of special events completed,* e.g. rallies.
- *Number of religious/opinion leaders* reached with campaign messages(s).
- *Total amount of funds (allocation and spent)* on the campaign.

Source: Developed from Tanzania's 'Nipo Tayari' Campaign materials

Clean Green Pakistan (CGP) is a flagship five-year campaign of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Recommendations for target setting
Choose targets – both for outcomes and processes – that do not limit improvement. View being ODF as an important achievement but also a milestone towards safely managed sanitation. Shift the focus from meeting a target to changing aspirations on how to build or buy or upgrade a latrine.
Create targets that cover the genuinely important aspects rather than those that are simple to measure i.e. create targets for being ODF AND behaviour change, meaning sustained access/use including gradual upgrading and achieving safely managed sanitation.
Find ways to ensure targets are owned by those who have to deliver them and respond to what stakeholders see as important.
Avoid harm in the campaign – intimidation, harassment, violence and coercive tactics. Enforcement should be carried out in a way that does not put households under undue pressure. Build in do-no-harm principles and ensure they are integrated into all aspects from the campaign and clearly defined and communicated. Understand and respect human rights in the processes and devise systems to ensure the same.
To foster better target-setting, campaigns should set reasonable timelines according to their baseline situation and available capacities and resources.
Baseline data should be shared with all players for them to appreciate what they are working towards.
Develop local-level plans, targets, milestones, and timelines to achieve national coverage goals. Ideally this would be based on a clear national vision, roadmap, and mission that coordinates actors and pools resources according to a common plan. We suggest a cascaded monitoring system that monitors changes at the subnational and national levels.

5. Success factors in achieving targets in sanitation campaign

Successful campaigns tend to include the following factors associated with good targeting, monitoring, and reporting:

Full and consistent backing of political leaders at the highest level is key. Unless a campaign is well supported by leaders in the Ministry of Health or Ministry of Water Supply at national level and at a sub-national level by local government, there is little chance of it being successful at village level. Prime ministers like Narendra Modi and President Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo have linked ODF and sanitation campaigns to their own credibility. In India, Prime Minister Modi made the sanitation campaign one of his top priorities and he swept the streets to launch the campaign. The Hygiene and Sanitation Presidential Initiative was launched in Rwanda 2010, Ghana Goes ODF launched in 2020 by the Deputy Minister for Sanitation and Water Resources, and President Nana Akufo-Addo launched the Clean Ghana Campaign in 2017. The first prime minister, Lee Kuan Yew kicked off the Keep Singapore Clean campaign (launched in 1968 and continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s). The prime minister of Nepal declared Kaski as the first ODF district of the country in 2011 and the president of Nepal formally declared Bhaktapur district an ODF zone at the 5th SACOSAN held in Nepal in 2013. However, when national sanitation campaigns are subject to high-level political commitment and party political priorities, it can create pressures for the over-reporting of results.

Proper planning backed by policies, action plans, and roadmaps: An explicit national policy is imperative. In countries with a federal structure it is important not to give too much discretion to state governments to take up the campaign: these should be driven from the centre if they are to yield results. In Nepal, the 'one household, one toilet' policy in the budget speech of 2009/10 and the Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2011 led to the nationwide sanitation campaign; the national target was then decentralised so that local governments had autonomy to set their own targets.

Sufficient and well-targeted sanitation funding is needed at all levels, especially for rural areas: Funding has a key role to play in the success of campaigns, including those using a CLTS-type approach (USAID, 2018). In Bangladesh, a national directive earmarked 20 per cent of annual local government development budgets for sanitation. Costed plans and ODF roadmaps have also been developed at federal/central or state/county government level in Nigeria and Kenya. Institutional arrangements must also be backed up by necessary financing – ad hoc institutional arrangements can only deliver part of the intended outcomes.

Institutional coordination: Working in a campaign mode means attracting a number of institutions and resources to help deliver the campaign, as implementing and/or funding partners. Coordination at all levels is therefore needed to increase collaboration among local government, development organisations, civil society organisations, media, and the private sector. The WASH coordination committees (WASH-CCs) in Nepal, for example, played an instrumental role in cross-sector collaboration and synergy at village, ward, municipality, district, and province levels.

Personal incentives in the cadres: Performance in the campaign can positively affect the career advancement of civil servants, sub-national/ district officers and village leaders. Champions of the national sanitation campaign are often publicly recognised; in India the prime minister awarded top-performers in national ceremonies. In Nepal, recognition of individuals as 'sanitation ambassadors', 'sanitation messengers', and 'sanitation champions' boosted morale to vitalise sanitation actions. Reward and recognition to individuals, schools, and local governments for their noteworthy contribution to sanitation empowered individuals and gained added mileage in sanitation actions, as well as attracting other cadres and individuals into sanitation actions. However, incentives can create pressure for over-reporting – rewards and recognition should be linked to a robust monitoring system.

Attention to technology: Campaigns have also included a review of the design of the toilets, for instance to include designs for high-water table or flood-area zones. The promotion of adequate technology is critical, i.e. not promoting ANY type of sanitation but rather that of a minimum quality that will ensure basic or safely managed services. The Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) created an expert committee for innovative sanitation technologies, although it has also been criticised for promoting twin-pits regardless of environmental conditions.

A social movement: Campaigns in India, Nepal, and elsewhere have been described as a social movement to mobilise local leaders, leveraging local finance and implementing community-level behaviour change initiatives. The SBM was made a people's movement, or 'Jan Andolan'[people's movement], to inspire and motivate collective action. The Clean Nigeria campaign has been designed as a 'transformational' social movement. The slogan 'sanitation for health, dignity and development' increased added mileage to the sanitation social campaign in Nepal.

Enforcement and sanctions: Campaigns can be undermined by a lack of sanctions for compliance at household, community, and administrative levels. A campaign needs a well-publicised enforcement mechanism to give the perception of a high likelihood of being caught if households continue to defecate in the open or don't improve their latrine. To be most effective, enforcement should involve legislation to make open defecation an offence. The 1967 Keep Singapore Clean campaign launch was followed by the introduction of the Public Health Law with fines for social control. Enforcement of community-devised sanctions (such as fines) can also contribute to the ODF outcome. In Nepal, popularisations of the National Sanitation and Hygiene Coordination Committee (NSHCC's) statement 'open defecation as a social crime' enabled local government, wards, and communities to enforce a social code of conduct on sanitation. However, enforcement and sanctions should integrate a 'do no harm' principle to avoid threatening, humiliating, and intimidating others into building a latrine or changing their sanitation practices.

When campaigns don't work

In some countries, monitoring has indicated the failure of sanitation campaigns. For example, in Kenya, where the ODF Rural Kenya campaign was launched in 2011, by the end of 2013 only 2 per cent of villages had been certified ODF. And in Tanzania, results of the National Sanitation Campaign Phase 1 (2011–2015) showed that in rural areas 92 per cent of the population were still using either shared toilets (4 per cent) or other unimproved facilities (71 per cent), or practising open defecation (17 per cent). Previous campaigns in India have also consistently failed.

Reasons include:

1. **Inappropriate methods for social mobilisation, demand generation and behaviour change:** There are no short cuts to becoming ODF. The completion of a campaign requires a raft of changes, which are implemented in incremental stages. Time is needed for positive reinforcement of good sanitation and hygiene standards. Thus, declarations should not be made prematurely.

2. **Campaigns are under-resourced or have no confirmed budget:** In Nigeria, federal and state government have been slow to release funding for the Clean Nigeria campaign. In Kenya, the ODF campaign failed to mobilise domestic investments, both public and private, for sanitation. One of the reasons for the limited success of the Phase 1 of the National Sanitation Campaign in Tanzania included delays in the disbursement of funds from national to local governments (Roma et al. 2013).
3. **Fizzling out after the launch:** In India, the Total Sanitation Campaign in 1999–2012 failed to produce the expected acceleration of sanitation coverage. Jairam Ramesh, India's then Rural Development Minister said the: 'Total Sanitation Campaign has been a failure. It is neither total, nor sanitation nor a campaign' (India Spend 2011). Similarly, WASH advocates and government officials acknowledge little has changed following the launch of the Clean Nigeria campaign (Adepoju 2019), while the 'Open Defection Free Rural Kenya by 2013' campaign failed to secure commitment from different players or to mobilise domestic partnerships and resources.
4. **Lack of explicit targets to reach the disadvantaged or a particular social and geographical context:** The people and places that need the intervention the most may be left out of the campaign, such as people with disabilities, cultural or ethnic groups or far flung communities.

6. Monitoring

Monitoring is a key element of sanitation campaigns. There are a number of aspects to monitoring a campaign for progress against achievement of campaign targets. To effectively measure impacts requires advanced planning from the start of a programme and the collection of baseline data.

Challenges for monitoring
Administrative data can be less reliable than survey data. Surveys (including baselines) and censuses measuring use of toilets by households are time consuming and costly. Census data is ultimately seen as gold standard over household surveys and administrative data, but the low frequency (10 years) is a disadvantage.
Understaffing in the administrative system and at ward/village /sub-village level can be a problem. There may be a shortage of skilled staff, and a lack of expertise in monitoring and reporting due to lack of resources, drop-out, and the frequent transfer of government employees
Incentives: there may be a lack of financial compensation for data collectors to complete the household sanitation registers, and a lack of incentives for monitoring in more hard-to-reach places.
Quality of data, including unreliable data, inflating the achievement of campaign targets, reconciling data from different actors into one national system, and double counting between inventories, is a challenge. Administrative data is unlikely to be reliable if the ministry is measuring outputs and is required to show results. Baselines are often carried out rapidly, meaning that some households are likely to have been left out.
Indicators: in India the focus was placed on one input (subsidy) and one output (toilets built), rather than a range of input, processes, outputs and outcomes. Misunderstanding terminology (improved/unimproved; urban/rural) among data collectors or methods of calculation between the Ministry of Statistics and the sanitation ministry were also challenges.
Monitoring funding: problems include late/unreliable disbursement of monitoring funds, unforeseen data collection costs, poor budget planning and execution funds, and no budget for regular monitoring visits to communities (transport, fuel, and refreshments).
Time: in India there was a shift in monitoring between 2014 and 2019 from assessing behaviour change to merely counting toilets as the target date for announcing ODF status in October 2019 came closer. There may also be delays between the campaign being completed and the last household building a latrine. Bottlenecks in data flow can also frustrate monitoring efforts.
Coordination can be a challenge, at central, regional, and district level as well as among the main actors in the sector.
Logistics: scattered households that are hard to reach even with a car, motorcycle, or bicycle has implications for the budget and time. Inadequate means of transport can hamper monitoring processes.

6.1 Sources of data

National data is often derived from a number of major sources. All are important for establishing a campaign baseline and monitoring progress, as they serve different purposes and can be complementary. (Robinson, 2021; Hucks & Axwesco, 2011)

- **Administrative data** counts infrastructure or measures service coverage and is collected by sector ministries through routine monitoring. For instance, routine monthly collection of household data by community volunteers and local government or programme staff feeds into administrative data such as water and sanitation inventories and databases.
- **Household surveys:** including multiple indicator cluster surveys (MICS), demographic and health surveys, and living standard measurement study, are usually carried out every two to five years, and measure the use of water and sanitation, and assess attitudes or knowledge. These are gathered by national statistical offices as well as NGO partners/ implementers of activities.
- **Censuses:** these are usually done every ten years, gathered by national statistical offices as well as NGO partners/implementers of activities. In India, the 2011 census revealed that 31 per cent of people in rural India had access to toilets, whereas the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation had reported coverage to be 68 per cent. Spurred in part by the new census data, a greater degree of commitment from senior leadership came from the ministry, who rebranded the Total Sanitation Campaign as 'Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan' in 2012.
- **Baseline surveys:** in Bangladesh, a nationwide baseline survey in 2003 found only 33 per cent of households had access to hygienic latrines and approximately 55 million people (42 per cent of the population) were practising open defecation, the majority of whom lived in rural areas (Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives 2005). In India, the 2012 baseline survey was used to estimate the percentage increase in households with toilets since 2014, as well as developing the management information system. However, weaknesses in the baseline can have a number of ramifications. Relying on the 2012 data in India meant some households were left out of the baseline i.e. the above-poverty-line households, new households, migrants, and so on.

- **Community assessments** such as transect walks are used in some ODF community-verification processes and structured observation of household sanitation and hygiene practices by an observer. Community-based monitoring is a useful tool for triangulation.

In addition to avoiding a reliance on one source of data, it is also important to achieve a balance between formal government-led processes and procedures and local ownership of monitoring.

6.2 Reliability and completeness of data

A reliable and transparent monitoring system is needed for recording and reporting results. Overreporting of sanitation data or inflating the achievement of campaign targets can be due to both weak monitoring systems and vested interests. Incentives may be needed to induce government officials and other campaign implementers to act in ways that reduce the possibility to mis/dis information and sanction opportunistic behaviour (such as fabrication in the monitoring process).

Misinformation

In a number of countries national data systems are fragile, which can inadvertently result in the sharing of factually incorrect information (misinformation). In some circumstances it can be difficult to get national monitoring systems to provide reliable, timely, and detailed information. Doubt about the veracity of sanitation data can result from:

- **Inaccurate baseline,** either from poor systems or weak baseline surveys. Baselines are often done in a hurry, at the start of a campaign. As a result, baselines may not have reliable information and subsequent reporting (even if correct) will not add up to realistic totals. Progress reporting will therefore be partially misleading as far as total coverage is concerned.
- **Incomplete community and households lists,** due to seasonal migration (for fishing, herding, and harvesting), new households or communities formed, abandoned households/communities, or households purposefully left out (e.g. from opposition political parties, or from minority ethnic, religious, or cultural groups) (Robinson 2021).

- **Data quality concerns:** Differences in definitions/categories/data collection methods between data providers. There are rarely systems in place to check data quality at the village level, e.g. through spot checks to pick up enumerator errors on paper-based registers; there are few incentives for data collectors to visit every household and limited capacity of data collectors. There may also be difficulty in aggregating the data, particularly where data is scattered across stakeholders and where data reports are partial (i.e. only from some communities or households) and are collected with various frequencies.
- **Long reporting chains:** Monitoring data may be passed along several stages in a chain from community, through extension workers, to local government or partners, and then aggregated perhaps at a national level (Pasteur 2017), which can result in misinformation.
- **Independent surveys not being fully independent:** Conflicts of interests may exist regarding the design and implementation of such studies/surveys. For example, it was reported that one of the clauses of the 2018–2019 National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) in India stated that the survey agency would have to re-verify/reconfirm findings at their own cost if they found non-completion of mandated targets in sample areas – disincentivising the reporting of negative results.

Example box: Contradictory surveys in India

In India, national and regionally representative household surveys under auspices of National Statistics Office and the National Family Health Survey reveal discrepancies with the government's administrative data (including the National Annual Sanitation Survey, NARSS, and the National Sample Survey). Independent surveys by organisations such as RICE also contain contradictory data.

- Census 2011 found that 31 per cent of households had toilet facilities.
- Baseline Survey 2012 reported that actual toilet coverage was 36 per cent of households.
- A 2018 nationwide National Statistics Office survey found that 28.7 per cent of rural households lacked access to toilets and 32 per cent practised open defecation. At that time, the SBM claimed that just 6 per cent of India's households lacked access to a toilet.
- A survey undertaken by the Research Institute of Compassionate Economics (RICE) (Gupta et al. 2019) found that between 42 per cent and 57 per cent of rural inhabitants over two years of age, in four states (Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh), defecate in the open – the preferred estimate was 43 per cent.
- National Family Health Survey 5 (2018–2019) data revealed that the population living in households with an improved sanitation facility is barely 45.7 per cent in Bihar, 63 per cent in Gujarat, 69 per cent in Maharashtra, and 64.7 per cent in West Bengal; however, it is 98 per cent in Kerala.

Disinformation

National sanitation campaigns require strong government intervention, driven by senior levels, from the outset of the campaign. These characteristics also make sanitation campaigns prone to disinformation. Monitoring can then become reduced to meeting pre-stated performance targets, which are manipulated to show that these have been met.

There are a number of examples of campaigns that are the flagship project of a prime minister/president. Top-down, target-driven campaigns can encourage perverse incentives associated with monitoring and reporting. Administrative records can be unreliable, especially if the ministry driving the programme is also measuring outputs and outcomes and is required to 'show results'. One symptom of this is 'advance reporting' in anticipation of the results by officials afraid to admit to the reality, or whose personal career development depends on success of the campaign. Over-reporting results can be a way to gain/maintain power, popularity, career progression, or reward (funds or votes). If targets are met, the achievements are publicly celebrated at national and local levels as well as in newspapers and television and on social media; community leaders may also be rewarded or gain kudos if they declare their communities ODF.

Manipulation of results undermines the declarations of national sanitation campaigns. If sanitation becomes a party political issue, driven by the governing party, it can be polarising and ignored or even resisted by opposition parties. Politically driven campaigns linked to a term of office provide little opportunity to monitor and evaluate long-term outcomes. Officers who resist pressures to inflate achievements risk being penalised. There are whistle-blowers – including lower-ranking officials, experts, and researchers – who allege retaliation or threats for speaking out against the inaccurate monitoring and declarations of ODF status. On the other hand, officials also have an incentive to under-report their baseline sanitation levels in order to attract resources through the campaign for a prolonged period.

6.3 Monitoring systems

Monitoring systems are tasked with tracking progress towards national/ sub-national targets (see section 4). The basis of the monitoring system is typically village registers established in/by communities. The data are collected by community volunteers and extension workers on a weekly or monthly basis. The registers track the progress of each household in improving their sanitation facilities and monthly totals are reported to wards and districts. District level results are then aggregated by local government officials or NGO programme staff, who then pass the data up for national tracking (Robinson, 2021). The ODF-status monitoring system is usually embedded in government national monitoring systems, which often have visual dashboards of trends and outcomes. National monitoring systems for sanitation and hygiene often only include a few critical indicators that are monitored across the entire country. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems use different assessment methods, with different tools and processes at different times to provide a comprehensive picture of change.

Actors in charge of monitoring: Monitoring activities are conducted by a range of different actors within government, including all levels of sub-national government, and different ministries and national institutions in charge of water, sanitation, health, or planning, as well as national statistics offices (Robinson, 2021). In addition, NGOs, donors, and UN agencies measure access and progress. Periodic monitoring can also be carried out by people who are paid to undertake assessments. Community volunteers, community WASH committees, and government health extension workers may also be involved, along with chiefs, religious leaders, health volunteers, and teachers. In some cases, however, those who do the monitoring are the same staff that facilitated CLTS triggering, which can cause concerns about conflicted interests. There are also actors who enforce by-laws; for instance, Sanitation Marshals from the National Sanitation Brigade in Ghana enforce rules and regulations on sanitation. The Monitoring and Action Team in Nepal cross-verify reported achievements through field visits and consultation with stakeholders.

Capacity building: Campaigns often focus on data collection without sufficient attention to strengthening planning and capacity building processes for monitoring. Few campaigns have set milestones and targets for strengthening national systems and capacity for monitoring. Capacity building in the statistics and WASH sector is also important to develop a common understanding of monitoring methods and procedures (Hucks & Axwesco, 2011). Training and orientation of supervisors and data collectors at sub-national level on the planning and monitoring field tools strengthens the quality and reliability of government systems for recording and reporting results.

Coordination systems: Use of different approaches, varying methods and definitions, and multiple data sources has the potential for confusion, duplication of efforts, and contradictions between national figures from different government agencies (Robinson, 2021; Hucks & Axwesco, 2011). Through dialogue and cooperation, coordination mechanisms (such as a central coordination team or an memorandum of understanding between sector actors) can bring actors together to promote harmonised standards for sector monitoring, coordinate surveys and censuses conducted by national statistics offices with sector ministries, and allow reconciliation between national bodies and sectoral/ statistical datasets.

Recommendations for monitoring
National campaigns require harmonised monitoring methods and procedures for reliable and timely data collection, verification, processing, and definitions.
Targets should include an outcome (e.g. ODF status) and a timeframe (a deadline), and be process-related (people reached with a specific activity or budget spent). Targets should be jointly planned with the various stakeholders.
A special unit or institutional framework is needed for coordinating the different national sanitation agencies and monitoring agencies.
Databases and survey tools should be aligned to avoid discrepancies in the data and definitions across the different surveys.
Incentivising data collectors is important to ensure quality data collection. Address 'What's in it for me?' incentives for community-level data collectors and high- and low-ranking officials, e.g. through recognition and supportive supervision.
Develop a common understanding of monitoring methods and procedures in the statistics and WASH sector. Harmonise methodology and develop a training guide for use by all.
Conduct joint monitoring with government authority, media, and WASH committees so that all stakeholders own the data. Joint monitoring teams can motivate data collectors and low-ranking government officials.
Triangulate administrative data with household observations, community records, fidelity with national protocols, spot observations, and independent surveys with a nationally representative estimation of ODF status.
Disaggregated data can be used to assess the distributional impacts of the campaign (i.e. which beneficiaries, and where, are deriving the most value). Use clear definitions of vulnerable groups and outliers to make sure the desired behaviour change is being taken up by those left behind.
Use households surveys to monitor the availability and use of toilets, handwashing with soap at critical times, and signs of open defecation around households.
Reaching 100 per cent of households requires an accurate baseline survey that includes 'left behind households'. Ideally, time the start of the campaign to coincide with the national census to ensure a credible baseline.

7. Reporting

Transparent reporting increases visibility about how campaigns are progressing and the steps they are taking to meet targets. Strategies to ensure transparency in the monitoring process can improve the trustworthiness of the information. Reports can be made through publicly accessible websites, social media, mass media, events, conferences, and personal visits.

Challenges for reporting
Reporting mechanisms, such as dashboards, are only effective if the data they are based on is accurate.
Interoperability between datasets/systems deployed by different sectors and agencies.
There are limitations to a voluntary approach to reporting/making campaign information available.
Campaign implementers are not always incentivised to publish campaign information – incentives for factual reporting and reporting failures are missing.
There is some (inevitable) variation in the quantity and quality of campaign data reported.

7.1 Reporting mechanisms specific to sanitation campaigns:

An online dashboard: data are uploaded (often monthly), enabling real-time visualisation of performance indicators. For example, Ghana has the Basic Sanitation Information System and Nigeria has the Clean Nigeria platform. India has a sophisticated online portal tracking budget expenditure and progress towards toilet construction targets. Nepal had a dashboard for monitoring its campaign, although it is not publicly available. Dashboards can make progress more transparent; they can also be used by political leadership to highlight the success of the campaign. However, examples of numbers of ODF villages reducing due to slippage is rarely captured.

Photos: in India, sub-district officers upload geo-tagged photos of newly constructed toilets after their field visits using a mobile app, often on publicly available website.

League tables: Tanzania and Ghana have initiatives to rank districts by their level of sanitation progress, highlighting progress and disparities among all districts. In Tanzania, the highest ranked districts were publicly awarded by the prime minister during the annual Sanitation Week and reported on by all media in the country.

Advertising boards in public places: these provide a summary of local information on ODF status.

7.2 General reporting mechanisms:

- *Reports from implementing agencies:* to their donors and government (national and sub-national), campaign secretariat, development partners, and so forth. Types of reports might include baseline survey reports, event-based reports, progress reports, and monitoring reports.
- *Information sharing between officials:* concurrent monitoring and troubleshooting through online chat platforms such as WhatsApp has been a real-time strategy that has worked in many Indian districts and at the national level. From India examples include monthly video conferences between the ministry and key state officers, and field visits or daily updates on WhatsApp groups. Sanitation conferences were used in Nepal and Thailand; in Thailand a conference was held periodically at national and provincial levels among sanitarians and health officials to review progress, identify constraints, and suggest solutions for improvement (Punpeng 2007).
- *Management information systems* (MIS) support with collating sanitation indicators and keeping track of progress. Nepal has a National Information Management Project containing a nationwide database of water and sanitation, and in Zambia the Ministry of Water Development, Sanitation and Environmental Protection uses its District Health Information System as the platform for the WASH-MIS for rural sanitation monitoring.
- *National Joint Sector Reviews* provide a forum for progress updates, programme reviews, and cross-learning between government and external agencies. These are often held annually in countries like Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Nigeria.
- *Sanitation Newsletter:* in Nepal, the NSHCC produced a periodic publication titled Sarsafai Sandesh (News on Sanitation).

7.3 Media and citizen reporting

Independent scrutiny helps build a culture of transparency, trust, and accountability in campaigns. Sanitation campaigns are typically extensively reported in newspapers, online, and through social media platforms. The media can be a powerful force for fact checking, challenging claims, and the provision of corrective information. In Nepal, the Journalist WASH Forum was involved in the campaign, likewise Ghana's WASH Journalists Network and the Media Coalition Against Open Defecation have been engaged in their national campaign. The media can play an investigative role, exposing failures to meet ODF targets and inform public debate; for instance, newspapers headlines include 'Nepal declared open defecation free, but people are still relieving themselves outdoors' (Mandal 2019) or 'Why Nigeria's campaign to end open defecation is failing' (Adepoju 2019). The capacity of journalists to report on sanitation has been strengthened in a number of countries; for instance, WaterAid has an annual Media Fellowship Program in India and Pakistan and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council had a Media Fellowship in Cambodia and also promoted WASH journalist networks in Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Malawi. Social media channels also offer opportunities for monitoring and accountability of campaigns. Indeed, some campaigns have Facebook or Twitter accounts, for instance #LetsCleanGhana for Ghana's national sanitation campaign. Citizen reporters also have a role in monitoring campaigns. In some cases citizens have challenged the veracity of the campaign claims of ODF status. Social media users have supplied corrective information, often in pictures. In particular, citizen reporting can highlight any misinformation or harms done through the campaign in the pursuit of ODF goals.

Recommendations for reporting
Agreed upon targets (e.g. toilet use rather than access) should be reported on consistently throughout the campaign.
Incentivise reporting of the actual situation: target-driven approaches often put pressure on people to over- report or under-report.
Media engagement can invigorate the campaign and contribute to transparency. Training journalists and providing sanitation campaigns fact sheets for the media can limit misinformation.
Reporting can help the public gain a greater understanding and awareness of the campaign. Make it easy for the public to monitor and assess the claims of progress.
Broad membership of ODF-status verification and certification committees (government stakeholders, community members, and external agencies) can reduce misinformation in campaigns.
An external agency – third party verification – can strengthen assurance that the monitoring mechanisms used to report results are reliable. Grievance redressal measures are important too.
Visual performance reports encourage transparency around the delivery of the campaign, making it possible to immediately identify daily, weekly, monthly, and annual variation.
Engaging various departments across government can deliver greater transparency, trust, and accountability.
Empower communities (who are rights' holders) to hold duty bearers to account. Strengthen citizen voices and participation to increase the success of the campaign. Create spaces for self-reporting by communities, in addition to duty bearers.

8. Limits to campaigns

Campaigns need to be realistic in terms of what can be achieved. For instance, realism is required in:

- Setting campaign timelines and outcome targets, considering the baseline level of improved sanitation use.
- The available resources to implement the campaign and monitor it.
- Processes of verification, declaration, and certification as well as the links between local- and national-level declaration.
- Recognising that ODF status is not a guarantee of 100 per cent access to and use of toilets. ODF status usually refers to the reduction to zero (or a very low defined target rate) of open defecation in a defined geographical area. Elimination of open defecation requires deliberate efforts and continued measures to prevent reversion.

Challenges for realism
ODF status is not a fixed, immutable property of the community. A campaign with a pass/fail target is likely to produce adverse effects, especially if the WASH system is incapable of reliably sustaining this standard.
Once the political commitment for the campaigns ends then human resources/ budget for sustained use and upgrading of toilet facilities to safely managed services may also diminish.
It is difficult to assess or compare the efficacy of campaigns. Funding constraints may limit evaluation processes, with evaluation taking place before the campaign is fully finished and consisting of just a before and after survey.

Once a village or higher level administrative area declares itself ODF, output monitoring (toilet counting) stops but outcome monitoring (toilet maintenance and use) ideally continues. Over time, toilets collapse or fill up, people move into the community, some people revert to old behaviours, or not all household members use a toilet all of the time (Coffey and Spears 2014). Thus, those communities declared early on in the campaign may no longer be ODF at the moment the entire country is being declared ODF. Experience from Nepal highlights that it is critical to have agreement between all stakeholders that a national claim can be made, following 100 per cent of district claims, if all the predefined protocols and processes are followed. It also requires a common understanding of what it means to declare a country ODF when some districts have been declared years earlier. Post-ODF-status follow-up and monitoring can contribute to preventing slippage and are key to the credibility of the national claim. Post-ODF-status monitoring could include formal surveys (such as third-party sustainability checks), regular surveys of attitudes towards being ODF, and profiling of non-adopters.

The end of the campaign is just a milestone along the way, rather than the end of the work or the journey. 'Mopping up' activities to ensure the completeness of ODF status typically happen in the post-ODF period. In both Nepal and India, national ODF status was considered the first step towards total sanitation, which was announced during the national declaration. Post-ODF-declaration sustainability is a critical part of plans for Total Sanitation in Nepal and SBM-G phase 2 in India. Sustaining ODF status can be built into post-ODF programmes to strengthen and sustain behaviour change over the long term. These monitor for any slippage in behaviour change and aim for additional elements relating to handwashing, household cleanliness, solid and liquid waste management, and so forth. In India, swachhagrahis (volunteers) are one of the key factors in achieving ODF status and sustaining it through post-ODF activities. In Nepal, the NSHCC-led ODF sustainability study of 2016 provides practical insights into factors contributing to slippage/regression. Issues identified by studies, surveys, and field monitoring, along with necessary corrective actions, were discussed in review, planning, and progress-sharing meetings/ workshops for district- and local-level WASH-CCs. Post-ODF strategies should also consider what will happen when pits fill up, and what can be done to move communities higher up the sanitation ladder. Periodic reverification is another form of post-ODF monitoring that is sometimes recommended. In Pakistan, ODF certification expires after six months and the verification team should visit again. In Botswana, a six-monthly post-ODF-certification survey is recommended (Pasteur 2017).

Recommendations for realism
Be realistic in moving towards an ODF target with a feasible timeline/date
Sanitation is an incremental, continuous process. ODF status is a first milestone on the sanitation journey. After the campaign, there needs to be a continued effort for moving towards safely managed sanitation.
Set campaign objectives to demonstrate continual improvement towards safely managed sanitation. This requires all stakeholders re-thinking both the ways that sanitation campaigns are implemented and the ways that achievements are reported. In particular, a framework and pathways for medium- and long-term goals are required.
Further measures and resources (including continued budget allocation and a plan for safely managed sanitation) are required from the government and partner agencies.

10. Case-Studies

Nepal sanitation campaign

Overview of campaign:

The prime minister instructed secretaries of different ministries to support a nation-wide ODF campaign through their budget and programmes. Campaign activities included CLTS approaches and school-led total sanitation, 'sector triggering' (triggering of different development sector actors), WASH summits, conferences and learning events, sanitation activities in cultural occasions and festivals, community and school level rallies and processions, drama, songs, and dance.

Targets:

The 2011 Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan set a national target of becoming an ODF country by 2017, with three milestones in terms of coverage of household toilets: 60 per cent by 2012/13, 80 per cent by 2014/15 and 100 per cent by 2016/17. These milestones were set on the basis of primary data produced by the National Information Management Project, the MIS of the then Department of Water Supply and Sewerage. Within the national framework, districts were given the freedom to set specific milestones and targets. The Master Plan set clear criteria for improved latrines with permanent sub-structures, which incentivised households to make a one-time investment in durable toilets.

Challenges:

Nepal missed the original deadline of 2017 due to a combination of the 2015 earthquakes, 2017 and 2019 Terai flooding, political strikes, and country-wide restructuring to a federal system. Other challenges included a lack of sector expertise at local government level, financial management, and sustainability and coordination between the three tiers of the government. If district/local WASH-CCs failed to achieve the envisaged results, the NSHCC conducted a meeting with WASH-CCs, media, and CSOs to

strategize actions. One such meeting was held in Kapilvastu District in 2018, to make ward authorities responsible for intensifying monitoring and reporting back to meetings with WASH-CCs.

Outcomes:

ODF was declared by toles, wards, school catchment areas, municipality/rural municipalities up to district level based on an established protocol. A joint meeting held on 25 September 2019 of the National Sanitation and Hygiene Steering Committee (NSHSC), the NSHCC, and stakeholders made the unanimous decision to make a country-wide declaration. On 30 September 2019, the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister of Nepal KP Sharma Oli declared Nepal an ODF nation based on the declarations made by 753 local governments and 77 districts. According to the NSHCC secretariat, sanitation coverage was around 99.5 per cent in June 2019; however, the MICS 2019 reported that open defecation rate in Nepal were at 5 per cent of households (4.2 per cent in urban and 6.7 per cent in rural areas).

M&E mechanisms used:

- The Master Plan emphasised national and sub-national level monitoring. It made the NSHSC, NSHCC, and WASH-CCs accountable to lead monitoring, verification and ODF declaration. WASH-CCs followed a standard monitoring, verification, and declaration protocol. However, the reporting format was designed for the needs of the local situation.
- Monitoring included: process monitoring by WASH-CCs and implementing agencies; outcome monitoring on construction and use of toilets hand washing station by WASH-CCs; and quality monitoring and self-monitoring by community groups, women's groups, and school clubs.
- The monitoring team of NSHCC and WASH-CC was led by government officials and comprised 7–9 members representing members of WASH-CC, media, civil society organisations, and user committees.
- Communities were monitored by ward-level WASH-CCs. The ward area was monitored by the village development committee (VDC), and by municipality WASH-CCs. VDC and municipality areas were monitored by district WASH-CCs. Districts were in turn monitored by province WASH-CCs (or the then regional WASH-CCs).
- Intensive central level monitoring in the districts lagging behind was carried out by Monitoring and Action Teams as well as members of the NSHCC and its task force.

Knowledge sharing, learning, and adapting

- The issues of slippages/regressions were identified through ODF sustainability studies, which were used by the NSHCC to address challenges – especially in the Terai districts.
- District and local level joint-monitoring enhanced stakeholders' collective responsibilities to map out actual field situation, cross-check existing data, and promote a culture of true reporting. Cross-VDC/municipality study visits and joint sector review learning visits enabled cross-checking of work undertaken by implementing agencies and facilitated peer-to-peer learning.
- Monitoring reports were discussed in NSHCC and WASH-CC meetings. Implementing agencies shared their data in a joint progress review meeting with WASH-CCs and stakeholders and cross-verified it with other WASH-CCs.

Success factors in monitoring success

- The Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan (2011) and the NSHCC/central level monitoring team played a role in coordinating national and sub-national stakeholders. Nepal harnessed an established cross-sector institutional arrangement (national, sub-national, and district) for monitoring that included government administrative staff, NGOs, the media, and members of the water user and sanitation committee. Memoranda of understanding between local government and development partners also supported coordination.

- Each district and VDC local level had their own ODF intervention plan, and their target and milestones were based on their sanitation status and stakeholder capacity. Monitoring was carried out on usability, sustainability, and sanitation behaviours.
- Independent monitoring by media and the Journalist WASH Forum played a critical role in monitoring, keeping up (political) momentum, and reinforcing accountability. For instance, the headline 'Prime Minister's District (Jhapa) Yet to Achieve ODF' published in a national daily triggered action across the country.
- Additional localised missions were used to boost/address specific areas/issues. The NSHCC launched the 'Terai Sanitation Mission' from 2014 to take into account stakeholders' reluctance to work in the Terai districts that had low sanitation coverage. The Terai Sanitation Mission attracted wider political attention, and monitoring was intensified in the Terai.
- Output-based payment to implementing agencies upon the attainment ODF made them fully responsible and accountable for accurate reporting of results, which proved to be a critical implementation modality.

What's next? Steps towards total sanitation:

Nepal has declared its intention to achieve total sanitation, aligned with the SDGs. Total sanitation is a continuation of the ODF movement for households, schools, health facilities, and other institutions. It includes, among others things, hand washing with soap at critical times; safe handling and treatment of drinking water at household level; proper personal hygiene; and proper solid and liquid waste management. Local governments are developing WASH plans to identify the financial and technical resource gaps for the implementation of sanitation and hygiene programmes and will also help determine ways to fill those gaps.

Key reflections/lessons

- The sanitation campaign unified ongoing community sanitation activities under planning, target setting, financing, and monitoring processes at district and local levels. Success factors include: clear sanitation sector objectives, common national goals, well defined targets, shared and clearly defined responsibilities of stakeholders, and a clear roadmap for the Sanitation and Hygiene Master Plan 2011. District and local level government authorities had full autonomy to set milestones and targets (within the overall national deadline) based on their status and stakeholders' capacity. In particular, the coordination committee structure was one of the key success features in Nepal for multi-sectoral, credible leadership of the campaign at all levels.
- The cross-sector 'Nepalgunj Commitment' and 'Surkhet Declarations on Sanitation' made after the cholera outbreaks in 2009 spurred on the sanitation campaign in the western part of the country. Signatories of the declarations at these sanitation conferences were collectively responsible to fulfil the sanitation target.
- There was a concern about the national declaration: some districts that declared ODF earlier on in the campaign may have slipped, while there was a rush to make sure the remaining districts became ODF. However, it was ultimately accepted that if all districts were declared ODF, then national ODF could be announced – as long as the government regarded being ODF as a milestone and Total Sanitation the higher goal to be attained.
- Targets at national, district, and local levels included milestones for effective planning, monitoring, motivation, and ODF declaration. District and local level declarations helped maintain the transparency of the campaign.

Source: Kamal Adhikari and Bharat Adhikari (2021) Nepal Sanitation Movement Lessons Learnt on Targets and Monitoring

Swachh Bharat Mission – Grameen (Clean India campaign)

Overview of campaign:

The prime minister of India launched the Swachh Bharat Mission on 2 October 2014. Under the mission, all villages, gram panchayats, districts, states, and union territories in India were targeted to declare themselves 'open-defecation free' by October 2019. This would require constructing over 100 million toilets in rural India. Activities under Phase I of Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) included promoting ODF behaviours in villages, celebrity messages, mass media campaigns, slogans, SBM app, events, and more.

Target:

The focus of the SBM was on achieving ODF status in rural areas, by the lowest level of representative government, the 'gram panchayat', or village-level body, referred to as the Panchayati Raj institutions (comprised of district, block, and village levels). Under the goals of the mission, every household in every village in India that did not have an individual household-level latrine had to have one by 2 October 2019, the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

M&E mechanisms used

- Guidelines prescribed monitoring mechanisms, although these were mainly related to disbursement of funds and construction of toilets. Mechanisms included: progress reports, performance review committee meetings, area officer's scheme, district level monitoring and vigilance and monitoring committees at the state/district level. An online monitoring system was developed for entering household-level data gathered from the baseline survey. A mobile application for uploading photographs of toilets constructed after 2 October 2014 was launched. The photographs were geo-tagged.

- A village swachhata (cleanliness) index was defined to measure the level of cleanliness of villages. This included factors such as access to safe toilets and also whether there was visible cleanliness around households and public places.
- The first level of monitoring was to ensure all the households were covered. Swacchagrahis (local sanitation workers) at the gram panchayat (GP) level carried out the survey, geotagging and uploading the data to the block level. Within each block, the block-level functionaries such as block resource coordinators or cluster resource coordinators compiled the data and submitted it to the districts, where it was verified and approved.
- The second level of monitoring was related to the release of funds from the districts for the construction of toilets. This was done in two or three phases and was dependent on the progress of construction. Beneficiaries were expected to invest their own money for constructing toilets (with an incentive of Rs. 12,000). Photos were uploaded by the swacchagrahis and block-level officials, which were then approved and the funds were then released either from the GP to the beneficiary or from the block to the beneficiary, directly to their account. This ensured timely release of funds and limited the misuse of funds.

- A Public Finance Management System was set up to track the fund flow from state down to beneficiary level.

Outcomes:

It was reported that over 100 million toilets had been constructed since 2 October 2014, and on 2 October 2019, the prime minister announced that all gram panchayats had declared themselves ODF. He did not say the Government of India was claiming the country was ODF.

Knowledge sharing, learning and adapting

- Capacity-building workshops, conferences, and other learning interactions with other state and district teams were highly promoted.
- Monitoring enabled the identification of issues as they emerged, thus allowing for trouble-shooting. For instance, when providing information on why people were not constructing toilets, the availability of sand was raised as an issue. The issue was presented to the district collector, who then publicly committed that sand would be provided free of charge for the purpose of constructing toilets.

Successes

- There has been a remarkable rise in the number of households with an individual household-level latrine since 2014. India's' total number of households that abandoned open defecation between 2014 and 2019 was probably higher than all combined progress elsewhere in the world, even though household toilet coverage and use is likely to be much lower than the government suggests.
- There was an MIS in place from the beginning of the SBM on the government of India's Department for Sanitation website, declaring how many toilets were being built and which districts were achieving ODF status (as defined by 100 per cent individual household-level latrines).

- Important roles were played by a) political leadership to the campaign, and b) the administrative leadership provided by top civil service. The prime minister's office monitored progress regularly throughout. The head of the civil service Department for Sanitation kept up the pressure with the chief secretaries of each state, district collectors/ magistrates, and the state secretary of each state's sanitation department throughout the campaign.

Challenges

- A campaign to achieve 100 per cent household-latrine coverage requires an accurate baseline survey. However the data was based on a 2012 survey that was carried out rather quickly and with limited resources, leading to inaccuracies in the baseline. Some households were left behind – subsequently termed 'left out of baseline' – and some households with joint families split into individual households.
- A survey conducted by the National Statistical Organization of a nationwide representative sample found that as of September 2018, 28.7 per cent of India's rural households lacked access to toilets and 32 per cent practised open defecation. At that time, official data from the SBM claimed that just 6 per cent of India's households lacked access to a toilet. This official data was not just from the Indian government, but it was supported by what was termed the National Annual Sanitation Survey. According to this, almost all households (97 per cent) who had a toilet, used it. Similarly the National Sample Survey (NSS) found that 95.2 per cent of rural households with a toilet used it regularly.
- Other external surveys, such as the RICE survey of 2018, revealed the proportion might have been lower than reports derived from the administrative data, with significant variation in usage within households (Gupta et al. 2019).
- Other issues lay in the definitions of open defecation. The SBM defined being ODF as having 100 per cent toilet usage at the household level, but the NSS uses a threshold of 50 per cent.

Lessons learned

- While SBM definitely improved sanitation, India may be far from completely ODF, since several independent surveys show that actual coverage is much lower than official reports. As the target date for announcing ODF status for India (October 2019) got closer, the increased pressure resulted in resorting to counting toilets rather than monitoring behaviour change.
- The credibility of ODF declarations at state/village level was itself questioned within the government, leading to the prime minister's announcement that the national ODF declaration was based on the village councils (gram panchayats) who had declared themselves ODF.
- While the administration tried to collect information on usage, it should have been made as part of the MIS along with a more of a robust mechanism for tracking toilet usage.
- The monitoring system (and associated resources) should have been adjusted to cope with the increase in speed and scale of toilet construction. Monitoring in SBM Phase 2 should have paid specific attention to those genuinely vulnerable and poor who had been left behind.

What's next? Steps towards total sanitation

ODF-plus is an important concept in SBM Phase 2. SBM Phase 2 was announced at the same time as India announced its national ODF status. To follow up on the success of the sanitation campaign, the Indian government launched a 10-year Sanitation Strategy 2019–2029. The strategy focuses on the need for states to continue their efforts to sustain the gains of the SBM Phase 1 mission through capacity strengthening, information, education, and communication efforts, organic waste management, plastic waste management, grey water management, and black water management. However, funding available to support Phase 2 has been reduced.

Source: Santosh Mehrotra (2021) Monitoring India's National Sanitation Campaign (2014-2020)

9. Conclusions

Countries including Ethiopia, Tanzania, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, China, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Pakistan are running sanitation campaigns with targets to eliminate open defecation or achieve 100 per cent toilet coverage by 2030 or sooner. But global experience – including in Nepal and India – reveals that gaps and challenges in monitoring have emerged in assessing short- and longer-term impacts of national sanitation campaigns. The deadline for a campaign can often create incentives to cut corners or speed up the process. Here are some key recommendations that can be useful across contexts to improve realism in monitoring sanitation campaigns.

	Recommendations
Target setting	Setting hard to reach targets has pros and cons: they can mobilise government and civil society to attain them but, on the other hand, fear of failure can also lead to perverse incentives to inflate achievements. Targets for ODF status should be seen as a progress milestone along the way towards safely managed sanitation for all. Develop a plan for how numerical targets and timelines can potentially be achieved.
Monitoring	Monitoring allows for progress to be reported against targets. Use multiple sources of data to monitor and verify equitable progress towards and beyond ODF status, i.e. administrative data, survey data, and census data, taking care to ensure consistency of the measuring scales.
Reporting	Reporting systems should be designed to respond to multiple needs and the multiple ways the monitoring information can be shared. Combine upward reporting (to the ministry or donor) with information sharing/reporting between the different campaign stakeholders as well as creating opportunities for direct citizen engagement in reporting.
Realism	Timelines and targets should be realistic in view of the baseline levels of coverage and the available resources. Agree on a clear process for making higher-level (such as national) ODF declarations once all of parts of the country are certified and build strong local ownership of the campaign through internal community monitoring. ODF status does not guarantee 100 per cent access to and use of toilets. Consider the need for policies around re-certifying.

Learning and research priorities

National, government-led sanitation campaigns have generally been 'learning by doing', including in the establishment of effective monitoring procedures. Few countries have evaluated their campaigns. Thus, it is difficult to assess or compare the overall efficacy of campaigns. Given the number of national campaigns currently underway, it is an important time to be sharing lessons and experiences to ensure that campaigns are continually improved. More learning and research is needed on how to design and deliver a campaign, including the 'science' of monitoring sanitation campaigns at the national and sub-national levels.

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Monitoring Sanitation Campaigns: Targets, Reporting and Realism

Many governments in Asia and Africa have set ambitious target dates for their countries becoming open defecation free (ODF). Some have recently concluded national sanitation campaigns; a number of countries have campaigns underway; while others are in the conceptualising and planning process. Monitoring and reporting results is one of the key challenges associated with these campaigns. This Frontiers of Sanitation presents lessons learnt to date to inform ongoing and future government campaigns intended to end open defecation and improve access to safely managed sanitation.

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