



**Research Unit**  
Press Information Bureau  
Government of India

## Swachh Bharat Mission: Transforming Women's Sanitation with Innovation

*Celebrating a Decade of Progress in India's Sanitation Drive*

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Women have long been disproportionately affected by the lack of proper sanitation facilities in India, facing significant challenges to safety, privacy, and dignity in public spaces. Recognizing this, the Swachh Bharat Mission has placed a strong focus on creating women-friendly toilets that address these critical needs. To accelerate efforts towards universal sanitation coverage, the Prime Minister of India launched the Swachh Bharat Mission on 2nd October 2014, marking a transformative shift in India's cleanliness drive.

As the nation celebrates a decade of the Swachh Bharat Mission and the Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign enters its seventh year under the theme "Swabhav Swachhata, Sanskar Swachhata," collective action and citizen participation remain at the forefront of this movement. One of the most impactful initiatives to emerge from these efforts is the development of inclusive sanitation facilities, particularly for women.



Among the standout innovations in women-friendly sanitation is the Sthree Toilet in Karnataka. Established at the bustling KSRTC bus terminal in Majestic, Bangalore, the Sthree Toilet is a prime example of how scrap vehicles can be repurposed to address public hygiene needs. This facility is designed with a comprehensive range of features, including Indian- and Western-style commodes, an incinerator, a sanitary napkin vending machine, and a dedicated space for baby feeding and diaper changing. Additionally, solar sensor lights, powered by a self-sustaining solar energy system, ensure that the facility remains well-lit and secure at all times. For women, particularly mothers with young children, the Sthree Toilet offers much-needed convenience and safety in a public space, making it an essential step toward gender-sensitive infrastructure.



Similarly, Pink Toilets, such as those built in Noida, are tailored specifically to the emergency needs of women and girls, emphasizing convenience, safety, and privacy. Since their launch in August 2019, these toilets have become an essential facility in urban areas, operating free of charge from 8 AM to 8 PM. Pink Toilets offer a range of features, from sanitary napkin vending machines and incinerators to designated spaces for breastfeeding mothers, bathing and changing rooms, and resting areas. In line with ODF++ criteria, these toilets are designed to be stain-free, hygienic, and inclusive, with features like disable-friendly seats and ICT-based feedback systems for continuous improvement.

In the journey towards universal sanitation, the creation of women-friendly toilets stands as a testament to India's evolving commitment to hygiene, safety, and dignity for all. As initiatives like the Sthree Toilets in Karnataka and Pink Toilets in Noida demonstrate, innovative infrastructure can profoundly change the lives of women by providing them with secure, clean, and accessible facilities. These projects go beyond merely addressing sanitation needs—they represent a broader movement towards gender equity, ensuring that women can navigate public spaces with confidence and comfort. As the Swachh Bharat Mission completes a decade and continues to inspire with its Swachhata Hi Seva 2024 campaign, the focus on inclusive sanitation marks not just a step forward for public health, but a leap towards a more equitable and empowered future for women in India.

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