

Role of Swachhagrahis in Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA):

Swachhagrahis, also known as “foot soldiers of cleanliness,” are the key grassroots motivators and change agents under the **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA)**. They play a crucial role in mobilizing communities to adopt safe sanitation practices and achieve the goals of the campaign — especially making India **Open Defecation Free (ODF)**.

Here is a detailed discussion of their role:

1. Community Mobilization and Awareness

- Swachhagrahis spread awareness among rural and urban communities about the importance of cleanliness, hygiene, and sanitation.
 - They use interpersonal communication, street plays, door-to-door visits, and village meetings to motivate people to build and use toilets.
 - They help in changing the age-old habits of open defecation through persuasion and behavioral change techniques.
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2. Behaviour Change Communication (BCC)

- Their major role is to bring about a **behavioural transformation** rather than just constructing toilets.
 - They use **Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)** methods to trigger feelings of shame, pride, and responsibility towards cleanliness.
 - They ensure sustained use of toilets and discourage the practice of open defecation even after toilets are built.
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3. Monitoring and Follow-up

- Swachhagrahis monitor the progress of toilet construction and ensure their proper usage by households.
- They report the status of sanitation activities to local authorities and help in identifying gaps.
- They also assist in ensuring that the villages sustain their ODF status.

4. Linking Communities with Government Schemes

- They help villagers access government incentives for toilet construction under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin).
- Swachhagrahis act as a bridge between the government and local communities, helping people avail financial and technical support for sanitation facilities.

5. Promoting Solid and Liquid Waste Management

- Apart from sanitation, Swachhagrahis also promote waste segregation, composting, and safe disposal of solid and liquid waste.
- They encourage households to keep their surroundings clean and participate in cleanliness drives.

6. Conducting Cleanliness Drives

- They take an active part in village-level cleanliness campaigns, rallies, and Swachhta events.
- They lead by example — keeping their own homes and surroundings clean to inspire others.

7. Sustaining the Swachh Bharat Mission

- Even after achieving ODF status, Swachhagrahis continue to motivate communities to maintain cleanliness.
- They work towards the broader goals of **Swachh Bharat Mission Phase II**, which include waste management and overall hygiene improvement.

Conclusion

Swachhagrahis are the **backbone of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan**. Their continuous efforts in motivating people, ensuring behavioural change, and sustaining sanitation improvements have

been instrumental in the success of the mission. They embody the spirit of Gandhiji's vision of a clean India through community participation and people's movement.