

World Bank approves \$1.5 billion loan for toilets in India

December 16 2015



In this June 30, 2015 file photo, an Indian girl holds a can filled with water and walks past railway tracks to defecate in the open in Mumbai, India. The World Bank has approved a \$1.5 billion loan for a sanitation program in India, where millions of people have no access to toilets. The bank said in a statement Wednesday that the loan will be used to support government efforts to provide toilets in villages and end the practice of open defecation by 2019. More than 500 million Indians, especially in rural areas, continue to defecate in the open, despite efforts to encourage people to change their habits. (AP Photo/Rajanish Kakade, file)

The World Bank has approved a \$1.5 billion loan for a state-led sanitation program in India, where millions of people have no access to toilets, the bank said Wednesday.

The loan, disbursed over a five-year period, will be used to support government efforts to provide toilets in villages and end the practice of open defecation by 2019, it said.

More than 500 million Indians, especially in rural areas, continue to defecate in the open, despite decades-long efforts to encourage people to change their habits.

"One in every 10 deaths in India is linked to poor sanitation," said Onno Ruhl, World Bank country director for India.

Low-income households bear the brunt of poor sanitation and the "sanitation project would result in significant health benefits for the poor and vulnerable, especially those living in rural areas," Ruhl said.

Defecating outdoors increases cases of diarrhea, parasitic worm infections and other public health scourges that experts say contribute to childhood stunting and malnutrition.



In this Nov. 19, 2015 file photo, a temporary toilet made by farmers for their use is seen near the River Yamuna in New Delhi, India. The World Bank has approved a \$1.5 billion loan for a sanitation program in India, where millions of people have no access to toilets. The bank said in a statement Wednesday that the loan will be used to support government efforts to provide toilets in villages and end the practice of open defecation by 2019. More than 500 million Indians, especially in rural areas, continue to defecate in the open, despite efforts to encourage people to change their habits. (AP Photo /Tsering Topgyal, file)

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