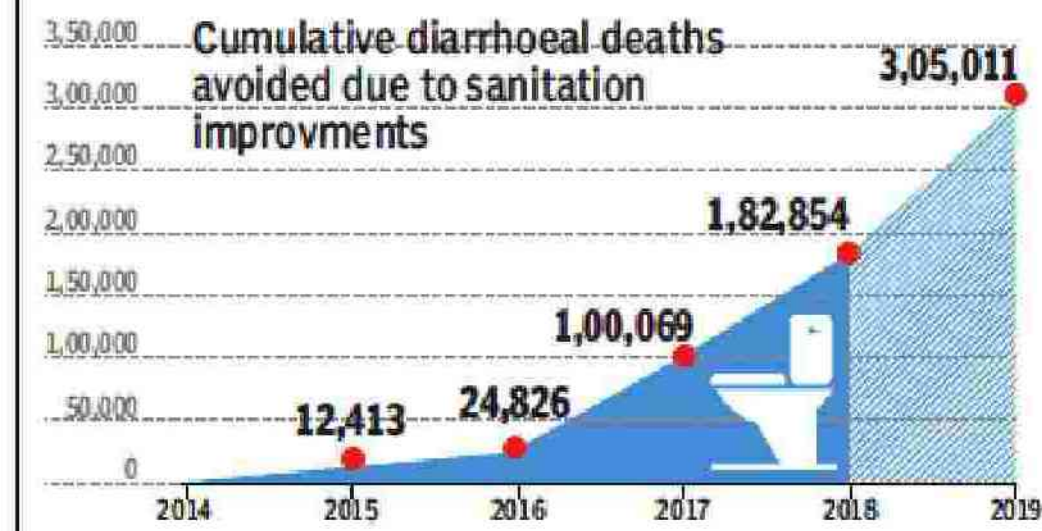


# 'Swachh mission saved 1.8L from diarrhoeal deaths'

## SAFE SANITATION



Source: WHO

**New Delhi:** At least 1.8 lakh diarrhoeal deaths have been averted in rural areas since the launch of Swachhta Bharat Mission which primarily focuses on building toilets, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has estimated. The report released on Friday projected saving of at least three lakh lives, if it achieves the October 2019 target of every household having access to sanitary toilets. The drinking water and sanitation ministry claims that till Friday, 89% houses in villages have got sanitary toilets.

"According to calculations, if all sanitation services are used, the initiative could result in over 14 million more years of healthy life in the period measured, with the benefits accruing yearly

thereafter," WHO said.

The drinking water and sanitation ministry said the achievement is remarkable given that before 2014 unsafe sanitation caused an estimated 199 million cases of diarrhoea annually.

The global public health body arrived at the numbers of life that may have been saved taking into account the data from the latest Rapid Survey of Children, National Family Health Survey and Swachh Bharat Mission. "WHO has not undertaken any primary data collection for the study. The figures used for sanitation coverage are assuming usage of sanitation services..." it said.

WHO said the methodology used to estimate the impact is a "well-established" one and has been used for studies such as the Global Burden of Disease.