

### A Creative Initiative for Behavior Change

The team of Officers from SVEEP division of the CEO Office, Gujarat started its homework almost one and half years before the Assembly Elections actually took place. A detailed scientific analysis of voter turnout during the previous Assembly and Parliamentary Elections was carried out. However, the focus this time was different.

*"We did not look at the turnout figures just as numbers. But we tried to understand and identify a pattern, which would tell us about the voting behaviors. Over years, we had realized that just limiting ourselves to awareness and education initiatives would not be suffice. We need to aim at behavior change, because the people who do not vote consistently are driven by their behaviors which need to be changed if we want them to come out and start exercising their democratic right"* – explains the Additional Chief Electoral Officer, Gujarat for SVEEP.

As per directive of ECI, a Baseline Survey of Knowledge, Attitude, Practices (KAP) of citizens across 40 ACs from 5 regions of the State was carried out covering different categories like Urban, Semi-Urban, Rural Backward, Forest, Developing, Industrial, Desert, Coastal, Inter State Border and Low Registration in respect of Gender, Age Cohort, EP Ratio. The survey suggested a low awareness about NOTA (55% unaware) and VVPAT (87% unaware). The survey also provided insights into various reasons reported by respondents for not voting. The survey findings coupled with the analysis of voter turnout from previous elections and discussions with the functionaries of low voter turnout ACs and Polling Stations helped to understand specific voting behaviors. In the follow up brainstorming sessions, it was decided to develop SVEEP initiatives that would go in depth of voters' minds and impact at attitude and behavior level. Subsequently a professional agency was brought on board to develop a Creative Campaign that would target the determinants and deterrents of the voting behavior and aim to achieve a change for positive voting turnout. More than 200 creatives were

developed as a part of the SVEEP 2017. This was an all encompassing campaign which step by step addressed each and every deterrent to voting behavior and thus motivated voters to respect their democratic right, infuse a sense of responsibility towards the democratic process and not miss voting for any reasons whatsoever.

Creatives were developed focusing on different target groups, covering different topics and based on some themes, which targeted specific behaviors. The target group specific creative included creative for youth, urban women, rural women, urban voters, rural voters, migrants, PwDs, senior citizens, tribal voters and third gender voters. The different topics covered by these creative include EVM-VVPAT, NOTA, Ethical Voting, Registration, Facilities available for PwDs etc.



Different series of creative targeting different groups and behaviors were developed. A series of creatives using characters like 'Bako' and 'Sonu' were developed for youth with a touch of humour and motivating people with a message "How can we forget voting!".



One series of creatives was developed focusing on how people of different occupations demonstrate 'Responsibility' in their occupations and encouraged them to exercise the same degree of 'Responsibility' in their electoral participation as well.

One of the most incisive series was 'Excuse versus Reality', where different excuses for not voting commonly provided by electors were taken up and responded with a solid reason about why one should vote instead of giving excuses. Every creative also had a common message that *"There can be many excuses for not voting, but only one reason to vote that I am a Responsible Citizen of India"*.



One series was developed using specific food habits of different regions for appealing the voters by giving a local touch. One series of creatives was developed for one of the most successful and widespread SVEEP strategies of Gujarat i.e. the Festival Based Intervention. One interesting series provided examples of things which are relatively difficult to do and this



was followed by a message on how 'Voting is So Easy'. This was targeted at communicating to voters that voting is actually a very easy process and everyone can vote without any hassle.

For example, the above creation says that to solve a Rubik's cube may be difficult but Voting is Very Easy.

Special creatives on EVM/VVPAT awareness with



tagline (#બટન દબાકે 'દેખો') emphasizing on being able to 'see' the vote were created. Similarly creatives emphasizing the importance of 'verifying' were also created.

One other series educated the voters through asking riddles related to Election process. For e.g. the following creative asks a riddle – 'What is common between the windshield of a Car and Election?' and then the answer is provided that 'Both are completely transparent'.



The Gujarat SVEEP campaign developed number of such series, which appealed to voter's minds and ensured engagement and behavior change in a step-by-step process.

The creative were developed in different languages as well as using rural, area specific and tribal dialects. Extensive dissemination was carried out through social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp as well as in form of placards, banners, hoardings etc. during mass awareness programs of SVEEP. More than 4 crore impressions were created over different social media platforms through different campaigns and hashtags.

*I do not hesitate to say that a high turnout of 69.04% with a high turnout particularly of groups like PwDs, senior citizens and women would not have been achieved without the collective and creative effort under SVEEP.* – proudly mentions the Chief Electoral Officer of Gujarat.

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