

PREFACE



Ms Naina Lal Kidwai
Chair, India Sanitation Coalition
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“Lenders in the WASH financing space have been exploring financing models for the sanitation supply chain enterprises, and faecal sludge and septage management (FSSM) operators. The journey for them may still be long enough to dissuade them from the final action - however the good news is the government and regulatory environment appear more supportive and conducive than ever before”.

“What is needed to get companies into the FSSM space is to ensure that they can operate for a profit and at scale; the government provide them an assurance that their businesses run without bureaucratic hurdles; the implementation partners work in tandem to complete projects with the intended impact; and higher standards around quality be created to help sustain the success of the programme”.

These were excerpts from a set of panel discussions made into a compendium entitled, “Sustainability Perspectives of an ODF India: A Synthesis with Interesting Revelations” carrying on-ground experiences and points of view from experts and sector practitioners across multiple disciplines including global corporates, policy makers and development partners. The discussions held at the India Sanitation Conclave 2019 were insightful, which prompted us to bring out a publication to cater to an audience that influences WASH outcomes in this country.

The efforts to sustain behavioural change achieved after five years of dedicated work by all stakeholders, spearheaded by Government has translated into one of the largest behaviour change movements in the world. The Union budget 2020 has also spoken of the latest technologies being made available to transform waste into energy which includes solid waste management as also faecal sludge. Financial incentives for resource recovery from faecal sludge will help encourage innovation of products and use for energy and fertiliser.

I hope the readers will find this publication relevant and useful.

Naina Lal Kidwai

Chair, India Sanitation Coalition

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Panel Discussion
India Sanitation Conclave 2019
Innovation in
**Credit Financing
in WASH**



Innovation in Credit Financing in WASH



The Panel Chair and Members at India Sanitation Conclave 2019



"What we really need to do is look at the technical and financial efficiency of the service provider as well as the policy, institutional, and regulatory arrangements," according to Joel Kolker, head of the Global Water Security & Sanitation Partnership at the World Bank.



Governments should encourage their financial sectors to prioritize socially oriented microloan products via regulations to enable larger proportions of low-income populations to access WASH. This allows governments more efficient use of their limited budgets¹.

Government policies and investment practices should facilitate investment from domestic and international investors and from private users themselves. Effective combinations of policies and practices can catalyse household, utility, and sector-level financing models that crowd in private funding to increase coverage more quickly and sustain services over time¹.

The SDG on clean water and sanitation, Goal 6, states that "by 2030, ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all," extending the original MDG 7 targets to cover all freshwater issues from the perspective of economic, social and environmental sustainability, in a holistic manner. The first two of the targets under SDG 6 raise ambitions to increase access to safe, sustainable water supplies and sanitation services. In particular, they aim to "achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking-water for all" (Target 6.1) and to "achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of

¹ file:///D:/User%20Profile/sanjeev.jha/Downloads/Water.org_Financing_SDG_Position_Paper_April_2017%20(3).pdf

women and girls and those in vulnerable situations" (Target 6.2). The new Targets 6.3-6.6 address issues that include, but go beyond, drinking-water supply and sanitation: wastewater management, water use efficiency, integrated water resources management (IWRM) and aquatic ecosystems' protection and restoration. Targets 6.a and 6.b focus on the means of implementation for achieving SDG 6².

Meeting these targets will require large investments in terms of finance and resources. The World Bank has estimated that globally, current levels of financing for WASH are only sufficient to cover the capital costs of achieving basic universal water, sanitation and hygiene services by 2030. Meeting SDG Targets 6.1 and 6.2 will require a tripling of capital investments to US\$ 114 billion per year, not to mention operations and maintenance (O&M) costs, which are key for sustainable services. Investments in WASH will also have positive effects and contribute to improving other critical areas related to public health covered by the SDGs such as nutrition, economic development, education, and climate resilience.

The financial challenges of meeting the SDGs raise many issues such as which options and opportunities exist to bridge the funding gaps, the nature of financing mechanisms, such as using a mix of public and private financing, how to increase financial efficiency in infrastructure development, service delivery and asset management, and viable approaches to tariff-setting and subsidies that address the dilemma between cost recovery and affordability from economics and human rights perspectives.

This report analyses the current WASH finance situation in countries including India, with an assessment of funding gaps to reach targets, financial planning and government budgets, as well as different sources of WASH financing (taxes, transfers and tariffs) and expenditure allocations. It also focuses on funding universal access to WASH, with a discussion of how the targeting and use of existing financial resources can be improved as well as what cost recovery and pro-poor affordability schemes and measures can be deployed to reach those under threat of being left behind.



Vedika Bhandarkar, Managing Director India, Water.org in her Opening Remarks Emphasizing that Achieving ODF is Great But the Journey Does Not End Here.

India Sanitation Coalition (ISC) realised that there was a job to be done in the space of WASH financing; collecting and collating evidence of current practice, trying out innovative financing mechanism to enable and enhance WASH financing and developing tools to take charge of a field that was more unfamiliar than many of us would care to admit. In line with these objectives, at the recently concluded India Sanitation Conclave, on a panel discussion was organised to deliberate some of these topics in the context of Swachh Bharat Mission. The following were the excerpts of that panel discussion.

Vedika Bhandarkar, Managing Director India, Water.org, who heads the organization's India operations with an aim to scale the impact in India besides serving as part time member of the Banks Board Bureau, chaired the proceedings.

Vedika, at the outset, was enthused to note that every conversation at the conclave, prior to the one she chaired, had financing as a point of discussion but cautioned that it so happened for the panellist realised that there were gaps on this count that were substantial and needed to be addressed on priority. "Achieving ODF is great but the journey does not end here; it's about ODF sustainability; it's about the treatment of waste; and it's about maintenance of the existing toilet infrastructure; all of it requires financing at every level", Vedika said in her opening remarks.

Calling herself an optimist, Vedika shared the good news that even at the household level, a lot of financing had already been done by institutions such as the microfinance ones, the government-

supported and the non-government self-help groups, and the banks. Vedika quoted a figure that was nothing short of astounding -21 lakh loans amounting to ₹ 3000 crores were disbursed at the household level out of which ₹1000 crores were financed in the last twelve months only. She, however, admitted that the requirement was much larger and needed to be discussed by the current panel.

On the enterprise level, Vedika appreciated both, the lenders, who she thought had already started looking at the financing models for sanitation supply chain enterprises, community drinking water enterprises, FSM operators, etc. with a certain degree of openness notwithstanding the reality that the journey for them was long enough to dissuade them from final action, and the government and regulatory environment which she cherished for being more supportive and conducive than ever before in the past.

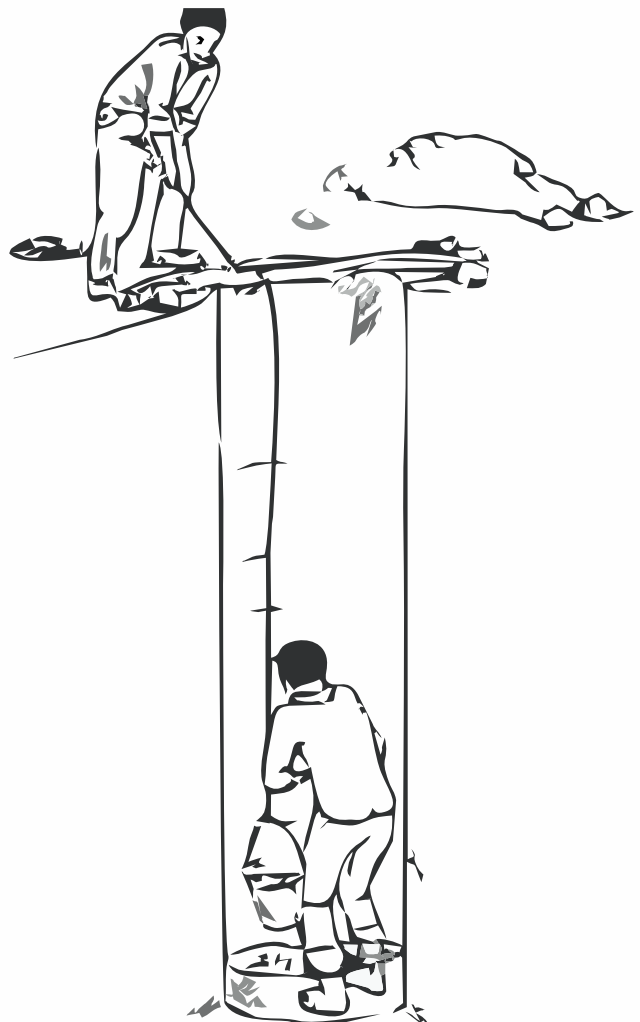
"Mr Parameswaran Iyer, Secretary to Government of India, Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (Jal Shakti in the new government) talked about a great push from his own ministry as well as from the Union Ministry of Finance for a sub-limit for water and sanitation with Reserve Bank of India and I hope it comes up soon. Otherwise also we know that there is already a move for interest subvention, a pretty significant one, which is likely to be announced post the installation of the new government in office", Vedika remarked.

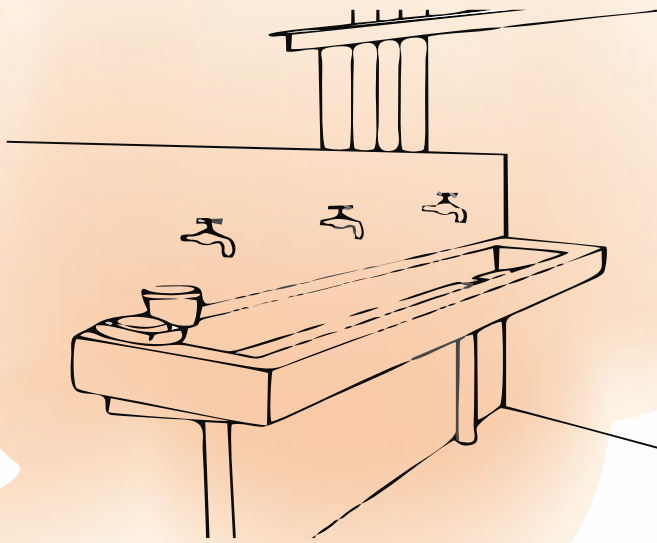
Thereafter Vedika introduced Dev Verma, Chief Operating Officer at Satin Creditcare Network Limited as one of the panellists. "M/s Satin Creditcare Network is credited to have disbursed more than one lakh loans over a period of just one year in the State of Bihar and that deserves a round of applause by all", she remarked. "Take us through the journey of your success; what contributed to it and what were the learnings", She asked Dev.

Responding to Devika, Dev shared that they were a microfinance organisation with a pan-Indian presence covering 23 states; had a client base of over 35,000, all women; operated in about 80,000 villages throughout the length and breadth of the country and were still expanding with a robust distribution network in the rural pockets.

"We started in 2016 with a pilot with Water.Org

and preferred to start with Bihar for we already had a client base there as also because the kind of requirements for sanitation loan that we thought existed in the State. In the first year, as we could not understand the dynamics of these lending vis-à-vis the household's sanitation needs, we could just do about 2000 odd loans. However, as we grew along with our knowledge partner, Water.Org and started to build upon the success stories and learning gleaned from our pilot, we did about 26000 loans in the next year and about 70000 in the last.", Dev said. According to him, the demand for a sanitation loan was always there and that they only needed to develop a product that would suit the rural folk's requirements in the water and sanitation space well. The only constraint these folks were faced with was that the total sum of money that they were likely to spend on individual toilet construction would often equal the household's total monthly income. That being so, these households were deterred to take up toilet construction on their own pending the receipt of





the incentive money based on their eligibility under SBM. "We therefore stepped in to support these households with our collateral-free loans, through a door-step banking solution, spread over a full year without jeopardising their livelihood and sources of income", Dev added.

Besides, Dev mentioned that there were several other things the success of their initiative could be attributed to. Important among them were the checks and audits post the disbursal of loans, exercised by Satin Creditcare Network themselves as well as those by their knowledge partner, Water.Org and the extraordinary publicity within Swachh Bharat Mission that had created an excitement around these credit options.

Highlighting the impact of their initiative, Dev cited two interesting stories from across these villages—a village collectively approaching their office to demand a loan for each household where a teenage girl had died of snakebite when she had gone defecating in the open; and a household demanding a loan to construct a toilet for the would-be daughter-in-law who had refused to marry their boy as they did not own an individual household toilet themselves.

Turning to the next panellist, Cheryl D. Hicks, Executive Director, Toilet Board Coalition (TBC), Vedika commented that TBC's accelerator programme was incubating entrepreneurs in the sanitation economy and then sought to know as to what had worked well and what had been the challenges as these entrepreneurs thought of the growth capital.

"The good news is that the pipeline is growing and the awareness that is built around the opportunities in sanitation economy, the sheer demand of it and those 62 USD billion numbers have really started to attract more talent which is really exciting. Across the three economies, therefore the business seems to have been on a path of growth", responded Cheryl.

"Our programme is a corporate accelerator programme based on the principle that large companies are selecting the smaller companies for specific partnerships that would help them to get to scale. And the smaller companies by engaging with large businesses would help themselves grow from zero to hundred faster", Cheryl added.



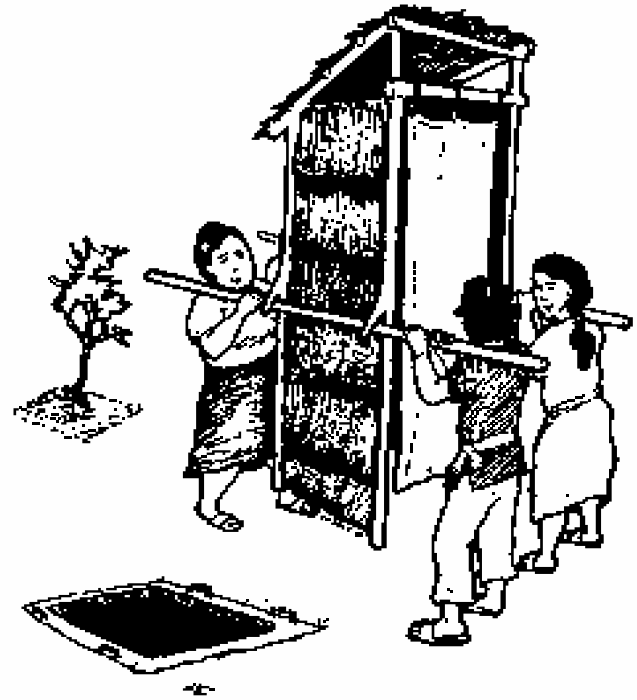
Royston Braganza, Director, Grameen Capital Took up the Possibility of the Proposed Model of Franchisee to Enable Entrepreneurship in Sanitation

Cheryl further shared that every business that had come through TBC's programme had at least doubled its revenue and often there was some quick win efficiency that could be gained on the supply chain side or marketing side but mostly there was a focus on particular area of growth where that partnership had been executed.

Cheryl substantiated her contention by way of sharing some instances of success in India. She cited the example of Tiger Toilets of Pune, India which harnessed vermifiltration, which was a passive process based on natural mechanisms for degrading and recycling waste.

"Tiger Toilets have partnered through Toilet Board Coalition (TBC) with Lixil Corporation, who have coincidentally won an ISC award today; with SATO, Lixil Corporation's innovative, durable and affordable toilet solutions for a better and more hygienic toilet experience, it is a nice perfect of match of toilet innovation and circular economy waste management innovation, which I prefer to call a 'banter' box. It is a fantastic success story of growth whereby a relatively smaller company has achieved economies of scale by increasing production and lowering costs", Cheryl remarked.

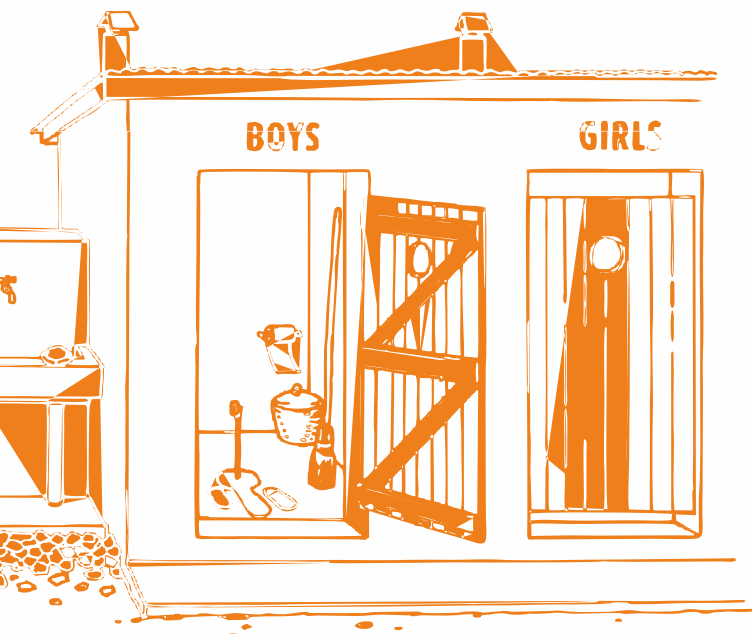
Another example that Cheryl talked of was "GARV Toilets" which typified smart toilets which came into being with the idea of addressing issues plaguing the public/community toilet landscape in the developing world including India. GARV addressed the primary issues of vandalism and poor upkeep associated with the proper functioning of public toilets which was achieved



through use of high-grade materials in the toilets and integrating software and sensor-based innovation for monitoring and initiating maintenance. "At the end of our programme they are partnering with the TBC partner, HUL around that new development", Cheryl said.

Cheryl mentioned another successful and profitable example of Saraplast (also known as 3S, its brand name), in partnership with three of TBC's member companies (HUL, Kimberly-Clark Corporation and Firmenich), who had come up with an innovative concept of Toilet Integration Centres (TiCs). TiCs provided women with clean and safe toilets, as well as incorporating points for the sale and disposal of female hygiene products. TiCs were created by refurbishing old buses into integrated sanitation hubs and, therefore, required relatively low levels of capital investment with significant impact.

Responding to a query put by the panel chair regarding the World Bank's contributions to the success of Swachh Bharat Mission, Xavier Chauvot de Beauchene, Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist with the World Bank, acknowledged the mission to be the world's largest push for sanitation. "We are indeed very proud to have supported the mission, but we have to give credit to those who have implemented it. What has come out of the National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS), an independent verification agent for the Bank's loan, is that there is a fundamental change



which is already happening on the ground and that it is a change for the good. Heartening it is to learn that the over 90% of the households who have access to a toilet are also using it regularly or always", Xavier quoted.

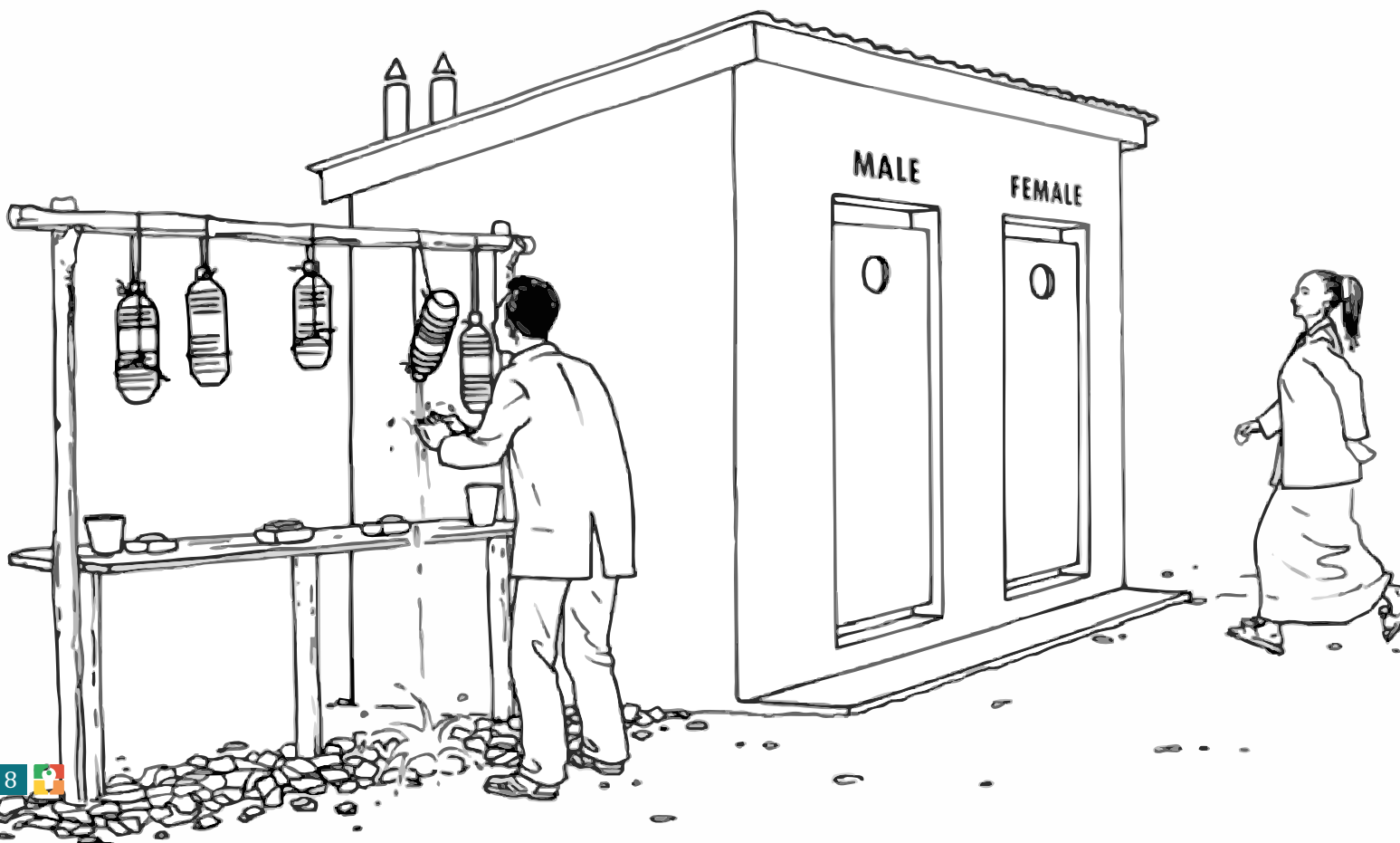
However, Xavier felt the key question was that whether post the closure of the current programme, which had actually witnessed a people's movement demonstrating a clear appetite or demand for rural sanitation, would the movement sustain the programme's closing date, the sunset clause.

"And that would only need the people to own it enough without the campaign really pushing for it. This is going to be of relevance not only at the household level but also at the village leadership and governmental levels, both State and National. This is where the Bank is supporting the Union ministry, enabling the entire implementation machinery to engrave into the DNA at all levels that rural sanitation is important as also in demand which has been amply demonstrated by the success of the programme this far", Xavier remarked.

Addressing the question as to what it would take to achieve that, Xavier said that consistency of demand would hold the key. "There is strong leadership at all levels that should sustain now. Besides, the sustainability must also begin from the households who if convinced shall not hesitate in building, maintaining and beautifying a toilet that they will also own and use", Xavier felt.

Xavier particularly mentioned the efforts that were being made to ensure the usage and maintenance of toilets where third parties had gotten them constructed without or with reduced household ownership.

"The Bank is supporting the programme in various ways. It has sanctioned a 1.5 billion USD loan which is also the largest in the world for sanitation and water combined. The reason why the Bank has put so much money on it is because the government is emphasizing a long-term objective; it is achieving, sustaining and also developing a solid and liquid waste management initiative to secure clean and healthy communities across India and when we see the benefits reaching the grassroots level beneficiaries, we decide to carry on", Xavier added.





Xavier Chauvot de Beauchene, Senior Water and Sanitation Specialist with The World Bank, acknowledged the mission to be the World's Largest Push for Sanitation

"Practically we are working with the ministry to engrave in their delivery machinery the fact that rural sanitation needs to continue; however, with or without government funding needs to be determined.

"The World Bank is supporting the government through technical assistance in various ways through guidelines, consulting, mobile apps and commercials including Darwaza Band Part II campaign with legendary Amitabh Bachchan which is running now. Besides, we are launching a massive training and capacity building campaign to raise awareness regarding rural sanitation targeting district officials and village sarpanches numbering 2,50,000 who are going to be the ones carrying the mission further", Xavier remarked.

Regarding the role of private sector in the rural sanitation programme, Xavier thought that it was only in a nascent stage and that he had yet to see a massive movement being driven by the sector towards sustainability for the programme. However, he thought that a partnership between the World Bank and private sector had the potential to be a game-changer in the sector particularly for sustainability.

Vedika, the panel chair switching between households and enterprises, requested Royston Braganza, another panellist and Director, Grameen Capital, who was credited with setting up and heading HSBC's microfinance & priority sector

business earlier during his career, to share the Grameen's Philosophy and the double bottom line agenda as it related to social enterprises specifically in respect of WASH.

At the outset of his turn, Royston took up the possibility of the proposed model of franchisee to enable entrepreneurship in sanitation and remarked that when they had started Grameen and people, small enterprises, they had gone to included 3 Fs, family, friends and 'fools' and then went on to add on a humorous note that they had chosen the role of fools for "fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

"On the question of how we bring the capital to really serve the bottom of the pyramid, I am surprised that people seem to be a disbeliever of the fact one can actually take up a model which is being run by philanthropy and CSR and then move it through mainstream sustainability.", Royston said.

Royston though admitted being influenced by his past successes with microfinance institutions, yet believed that the same model, whereby NGOs were helped to transition from being a non-profit entity to a for-profit company, a non-bank finance company, an SFB or a mainstream bank, could be implemented to enable WASH financing.

"We have got a model that has worked for microfinance, so why we should not replicate that

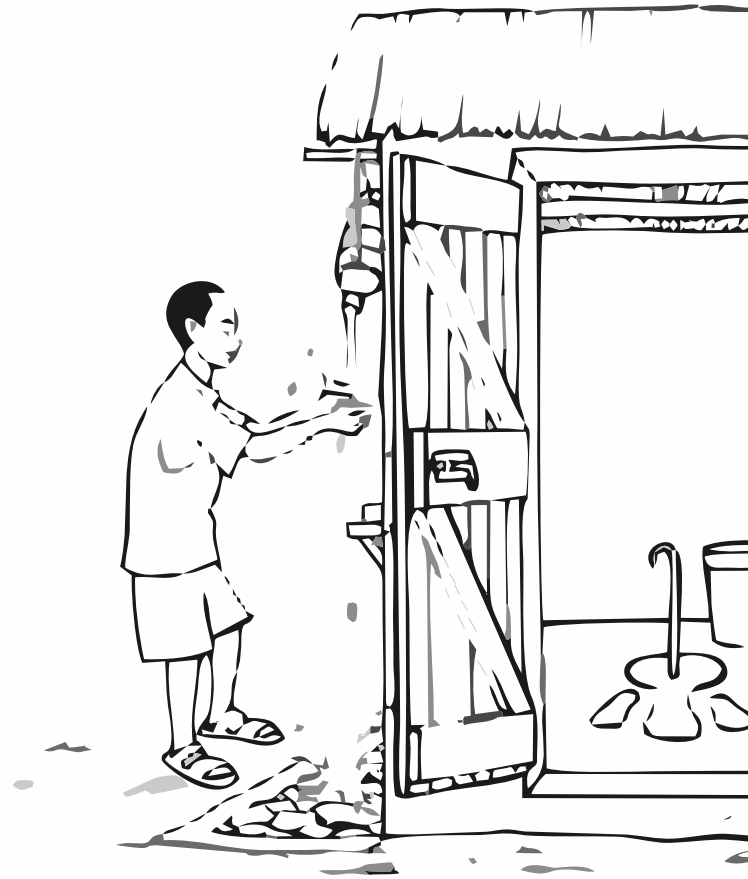
model in sanitation; why any attempt to reinvent the wheel? I remember when about 10 years ago the Rockefeller Foundation wanted to give us 5 million US dollars for microfinance in India but Grameen being what it was refused that money and advised them to keep that money in a bank and give us a standby letter of credit (SBLC) on the back of that money. We would give that to banks enabling them to lend to MFIs and as the banks get comfort, enhance that guarantee to multiple times and also lend without guarantee. And once that happens, we will give that instrument to another MFI for another bank and together we would be able to do a 150 million dollars enabling on the back only 5 million", Royston proposed.

"Cannot we together in this room put a 10 million dollar to create a pool of guarantees and then take all the winners of the ISC-FICCI awardees to bring them to a financing model", Royston questioned.

"My crazy dream is to create a capital with a conscientious ecosystem which is a social investment bank, social debt company, social equity fund and social stock exchange. The social investment bank we opened 10 years ago, 2 years ago we launched a social debt company called Grameen Impact India where we said in some way the financial inclusion box is checked and how we can bring those learnings to affordable healthcare, affordable education, WASH, clean energy and agriculture", Royston further shared.

"We have SEBI ride the social venture capital fund where we want to do social stock exchange to completely democratize the funding access", he added.

Royston discussed an interesting possibility of a school kid putting his 300 rupees, earned through birthday gift, onto Facebook where 500 of his school friends joining him to create a crowd funding to support the O & M of a public toilet anywhere in the country, and emphasized the need to think through the paradigm of sustainability where successful models of implementation can be created with support from institutions like the World Bank and other similar institutions.



Royston also hinted at the potential that the Indian Microfinance Network which he chaired, with its 30 million clients carried for enabling WASH financing for achieving sustainability.

The discussion on the panel thus concluded, benefitting from the vast and varied points of view brought in by the panellists, the deliberations around the current WASH finance situation in India, the funding gaps therein as also how the targeting and use of existing financial resources can be improved specially to benefit the disadvantaged section of the society. For ISC, stimulating catalytic investment through innovative financing mechanism is key to delivering on the task of sustainable sanitation at scale. The representations made by ISC to the government of India under the aegis of the High-Level Committee on CSR has specifically identified the key themes discussed herein for consideration by the committee for the purpose of refreshing the CSR Act.



Panel Discussion
India Sanitation Conclave 2019
Developing
FSM as Business

Developing FSM as Business



The Chair and Members of the Panel at India Sanitation Conclave 2019



*"There's almost a mathematical proportional relationship between, on the one hand, the non-glamorous nature of water, sanitation and hygiene and, on the other hand, its objective development significance. If we don't get SDG 6 right, none of the SDGs will function and actually be delivered."
Hon Kevin Rudd, Former Prime Minister of Australia and Chair of SWA*



The Indian economy presents an interesting case of growing per capita income, however, relatively slower growth rate in improvement of sanitation conditions. While there has been considerable improvement since the launch of the Swachh Bharat Mission — the National Annual Rural Sanitation Survey (NARSS) 2018-19 has reported, as on March 5, 2019 that the number of Indians defecating in the open has come down to under 50 million, from 550 million in 2014 — we still have a long way to go¹.

For now, the sanitation sector is still dominated by public sector actors and the role of the private sector is only gradually emerging in various components of the

sanitation service chain— construction of toilets, emptying and transport of faecal sludge (FS) from onsite sanitation systems (OSSs), and operational contracts from the public sector to operate and manage treatment plants².

Given the common situation of publicly financed waste and sanitation services, the term 'business' model might appear out-of-place in this sector. However, with increasing calls for cost recovery and private sector participation, the thinking is changing, and business models are needed to conceptualize sustainable sanitation service chains: models for emptying and transport of faecal sludge; models linking emptying,

¹ <https://www.thehindu.com/thread/politics-and-policy/how-open-defecation-free-is-india-really/article25191578.ece>

² http://www.iwmi.cgiar.org/Publications/wle/rrr/resource_recovery_and_reuse-series_6.pdf



The Chair, Madhu Krishna, Giving her Opening Remarks

transport and treatment as well as those emphasizing reuse at the end of the service chain; and models covering the entire sanitation service chain from toilet access to reuse.

The challenge of sanitation in Indian cities is acute. With very poor sewerage networks, a large number of the urban poor still depend on public toilets. Many public toilets have no water supply while the outlets of many others with water supply are not connected to the city's sewerage system. The sanitation landscape in India may still be littered with unsanitary bucket latrines, which require sanitation workers or scavengers to conduct house-to-house excreta collection³.

In line with these objectives, at the recently concluded India Sanitation Conclave, a panel discussion was organised to deliberate the various facets of faecal sludge management (FSM) as a business opportunity, the necessary ingredients that are required to make FSM a viable business, the challenges and policy interventions required, the various service delivery models and technological interventions required to help make sanitation a viable business and some of other related topics in the context of Swachh Bharat Mission. The following were the excerpts of that panel discussion.

Madhu Krishna, who led the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation's India initiative on water, sanitation and hygiene and brought with her a diversity of experience in a wide range of fields including private, public and non-profit sector works, presided over the panel.

At the outset, Madhu expressed complete satisfaction and appreciation of the work being carried out by the government in securing an open defecation free India as also of the fact that the two Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) secretaries to Government of India, overseeing SBM Urban and SBM Rural, had talked about the on-site sanitation systems and relevance of faecal sludge and septage management (FSSM) and the headways that the government had made in the domain, in their respective

keynotes at the inaugural session of the conclave itself.

“Several may have travelled long journeys to achieve safe sanitation outcomes, however, none of these are complete if the finishing line is not identified with 'treatment'. Also, the long-term health benefits do not accrue if the entire value chain of sanitation including treatment is not addressed in a holistic manner”, Madhu emphasized.

Madhu highlighted in her opening remarks that Gates Foundation was closely working with both the ministries in the government who were implementing SBM and that she was pleased to notice how responsive the two ministries had been to the expert advice and guidance to imbibe the learning and reflect it into their policies and practices at such speed as had never before been seen in the country.

“We are proud to have partnered with the government, for what they have created is a huge momentum around FSM and the other components of the sanitation value chain, which is not just limited to speeches or policies on paper but actually amounts to money being put behind these interventions enabling their implementation in the right earnest”, Madhu explained.

Madhu felt that the government's main role was to help put the infrastructure and then everyone else was expected to come and provide the other pieces of the value chain to offer sustainable sanitation solutions. She referred to India Sanitation Coalition (ISC) as being especially poised to lead the way, with support from its members and partners, and lend all kinds of support to this flagship initiative of the government in sanitation within their BUMT framework.

“When we ask people to invest in sanitation, we advise them to do so by counting right from the get-go to all the other components of the investment chain,



including not just 'build' but also 'use'. Besides, we know better than most that the government machinery is generally not skilled enough to be able to design, plan and execute the messaging around behaviour change all by themselves, so they look for support from the civic bodies as also from technical partners to create those drives”, remarked Madhu.

In February 2018, The Economic Times wrote in their news article, “... although there is an unprecedented focus on building toilets, community groups or even school managements do not demonstrate the same enthusiasm for their upkeep. Students and young members of a family tend to destroy the toilet fittings such as taps, lights or urine separators or litter paper everywhere. There is little inclination among users to keep toilets clean so that they do not spread disease.”

Madhu informed the panellists and other conclave participants that maintenance of the toilet infrastructure being created during SBM was an issue that was prominently figuring on the government agenda besides waste management, and that to address them, it must make an efficient allocation of the available resources, including those from the private sector, to achieve the intended objectives.

“We are sitting at a national level coalition where our whole effort should be around bridging the gaps in funding and providing a platform for increased private sector engagement in the sector”, Madhu demanded.

“We are going to deliberate through this panel the gaps that exist in implementation; the barriers that impede the progress in furthering the objectives of the programme; and the ways and means to ensure private sector participation so as to set a higher benchmark for the sanitation services, including FSSM, for which people should be willing to pay without much hassle.

“We have witnessed how important the role of private sector has been in the creation of toilet infrastructure; and we are convinced that their contribution to FSSM,



etc. is likely to be way more significant given the quality assurance needs of the processes and products that define these interventions”, Madhu said before concluding her opening remarks.

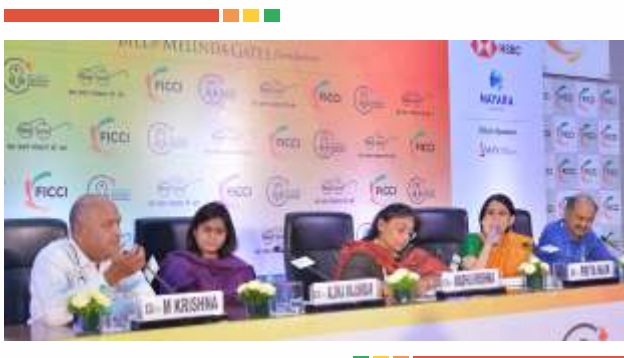
Before inviting the panellists, the panel chair appreciated having a range of expertise available to carry forward this discussion to generate newer insights into the issue on hand covering multiple facets of it.

The panel chair before inviting Aloka Majumdar, Senior Vice President & Head of Corporate Sustainability at HSBC India commented that HSBC was uniquely positioned not only because of their backing to BUMT in its totality but also because of their specific support to FSM interventions across different geographies.

“We are keen to know as to what has prompted HSBC from a CSR angle to support these interventions, particularly FSM and how best can the coalition, utilising the network of its members and partners, showcase these financing models to other similar institutions to enable FSM financing”, Madhu asked.

“I am just wondering how the journey has been thus far with ISC who we have partnered with for more than three years now. It all started with construction of toilets and then we moved on to demand generation and behaviour change aspects of sanitation. And suddenly, we realise that WASH financing has emerged as the key attention-grabber for the sector practitioners and programme stakeholders alike in all the spaces that are included in conversation by them”, Aloka said at the outset.

“So, from construction and generating demands to now maintenance, when we take stock of the programmes we support, do we realise that these surely focus on facilitating financing in sanitation, encompassing a broad range. It begins from construction, goes onto maintenance; and now FSM is a large piece with the potential to consume the major proportion of the resources, Aloka added.



M Krishna, Managing Director of Kam Avida Enviro Engineers discussing what he saw as the barriers as also facilitators in the kind of business that he was doing.

Aloka shared that once the nation had achieved the ODF or near-ODF status, FSM would certainly become a necessity, to sustain that status, as also perhaps the biggest challenge, for we did not seem to have the requisite infrastructure to operate and maintain these units on a sustained basis.

Aloka then talked about WASH financing and business opportunities in sanitation and the role that grants-in-aid might stall have in the space. “I do not see any possibility of grants going off the sector immediately. In fact, they can still play a vey big role in creating solutions”, she commented.

“The other things that we are going to look at are the new modes of funding. We are already talking about innovative financing instruments such as social and development impact bonds; and innovation funds stand out as promising instruments for addressing various policy challenges including those regarding sanitation”, Aloka added.

“The grant market is also maturing and going forward, we see new modes of funding through CSR. The government has already allowed for CSR grants to be used for funding incubation. So, that is going to be one big piece”.

Aloka then mentioned how badly the working capital was needed by small enterprises operating in the sector. “Revolving loan as a product is something which is going to be relevant to these enterprises and if grants can be utilised for the purpose, it may create a major impact”, Aloka concluded.

The panel chair responding to Aloka expressed her satisfaction that entrepreneurs would be pleased to hear Aloka's thoughts and thereafter requested M Krishna, Managing Director of Kam Avida Enviro

Engineers to deliberate what he saw as the barriers as also facilitators in the kind of business that he was doing. “Obviously, FSM is growing and there is a huge government commitment at least for the capital expenditure for it. Some are also looking at how you do the desludging as also the government's engagement in it”, Madhu backgrounded Krishna.

“We have been around in this ecosystem for nearly a decade and welcome the new shift to FSM. There are two constraints that I genuinely see in the space.”

“Although there is a lot of focus at the central top-down level, yet as you keep moving down the tier, the impediments far outweigh the opportunities.”

“There is a central government commitment to the cause, then there are State governments who implement followed by the urban local bodies with whom an entrepreneur ends up working; and that is an area of challenge”, Krishna elaborated.

“So, when one makes an investment, a decent return is generally expected. However, when one works with a new ULB, which is awkwardly opaque to deal with, there is the huge risk involved.”

“At the ground level, therefore, there is no euphoria. People are not really keen to put money. They are rather apprehensive and nervous about getting into this business and not being paid in time resulting in their being caught in a vicious cycle”, Krishna added.

However, Krishna was confident that if the said issue could be taken care of by way of building a mandate in the contract itself and if the entrepreneurs could be facilitated to receive their payments month after month, as per the provision made in their contracts, enabling working capital availability, the business in all likelihood would be more viable.



The panel chair, Madhu Krishna highlighted in her opening remarks as to why FSM was a tricky business, a dilemma.

“We have seen that in the case of municipal solid waste (MSW) management which is highly influenced by the socioeconomic and political driver in the society.

“These were big players who came into this business but did not get paid on time and their machines were kept idle for periods longer than what would have allowed their being put to operation again to generate profits for their owners”, Krishna said.

Krishna further highlighted the need of a deeper floor price in the actual framework of the contract entered into by the municipalities. “In India, making profits is a bad phrase, so when you go to municipalities and want to work with them, they want to squeeze you down to the bare minimum in terms of pricing.”

“However, if you expect people to invest time and money and not make profit out of it, then you are living only in a world of your own. That is a myth that we need to break. If you want people to come and play an FSM, then they need to make money out of it.”

“This is not going to happen, for the municipal bodies have an inherent tendency to initiate actions for non-payment as also for termination of contract almost at their whims and fancies. It is completely a one-way street, and one would rather have to be foolish enough to be in that space”, Krishna summed up.

Turing to the next panellist, N Sampath Kumar, Managing Director, Tide Technocrats, an environmental solutions organization of repute, Madhu remarked that Sampath was a front runner in the business of FSM and also an innovator and then sought to know from him as to what he thought were the barriers that he would like to focus for the visibility of ISC as also the NFSSM alliance enabling these entities to provide the kind of support that would facilitate his business towards serving the cause of sanitation in his areas of operation.

“We are into the business of FSM because of the Gates Foundation, for that was the starting point. It was during the execution of a different project when we'd tested certain equipment for the Gates Foundation and somehow, I fell in love with the idea of FSM-as-a-business.”

“I only used to do solid waste management in the past and half of my life was spent towards that so much so that I was always a 'waste' man for my daughter and son. But now I have become a shit man.”

Sampath, who deserved to be complimented for his dedication and commitment to the running of the FSM club, emphasized that for the next 10-20 years they were kind of wedded to the project.



“Our experience in Andhra Pradesh has been very interesting in terms of financing.” He referred to a particular contract, done for the State which he considered as being pretty well-made and even-handed. However, after winning the contract, when Sampath approached the bank for financial support, the institution wanted to know, based on the model of the contract which the bankers labeled as hybrid annuity model agreement, that whether it was a term loan that he'd sought or he'd needed credit to fulfill the requirements of a working capital.

“After six months of your project, you are going to give the equipment back to the municipality, so, you are not in possession of any primary security against which we would have sanctioned a loan”, the bankers added to the woe of Tide Technocrats.

The unrelenting bankers then said something that was totally unacceptable though pretty much a reality. They were deeply skeptical of the intent on the part of the local government to make payments to the FSM operators such as Tide Technocrats.

“Therefore, there seems to be a profound policy need from the top level to come down to the banks to say that these are projects of national importance these institutions need to trust.”

“The bankers told us that they were pretty much convinced with our project and confident that we would also be able to deliver on our promises, but they could not somehow trust the ecosystem as a whole under which the credit was sought”, said Sampath.

“That is an area of challenge and a lot of trust building has to happen if there has to be any entrepreneurship in the FSM space.”

“The operators have therefore laid themselves off from this space as a consequence of the above and only small or slightly above small firms such as ours have risked it out with the government for a cause that is so close to our heart. However, if things do not go down well with us, not because of what we do but because the system may have failed and resisted entrepreneurship, then there is

going to be a huge setback favouring nothing that would have gone a long way facilitating ODF sustainability and a Swachh Bharat in truer sense”, Sampath summed up.

There were concerns that got reflected in Madhu's reactions post what Sampath had said. She felt that the bankers needed to be sensitised towards building the much-needed trust in the FSM ecosystem enabling financing and that the two secretaries to Government of India, in-charge of Swachh Bharat Mission Urban and Rural, could well be approached for facilitating such a move through the relevant ministries in the government.

“When I first started talking FSM to the corporates, none had even heard of it. Then they were focussed on the madness of construction of toilets, maintenance thereof, behaviour change, etc. and FSM had not even featured. So, I think the work that NFSSM alliance has been doing for quite some time is critical in creating that awareness about FSM”, Priya Naik, Founder & CEO, Samhita Social Ventures said in her opening remarks.

“Until you fix the supply side of the intervention in question, why would funders come forward to support it. So, the government needs to do a few things about it including its incorporation into the policy framework for sanitation; they need to argue, discuss and render discourses around FSM to create the buzz and excitement much like Swachh Bharat did for toilet construction”, Priya remarked.

“Besides, the government needs to provide opportunities at scale. If they want serious players to

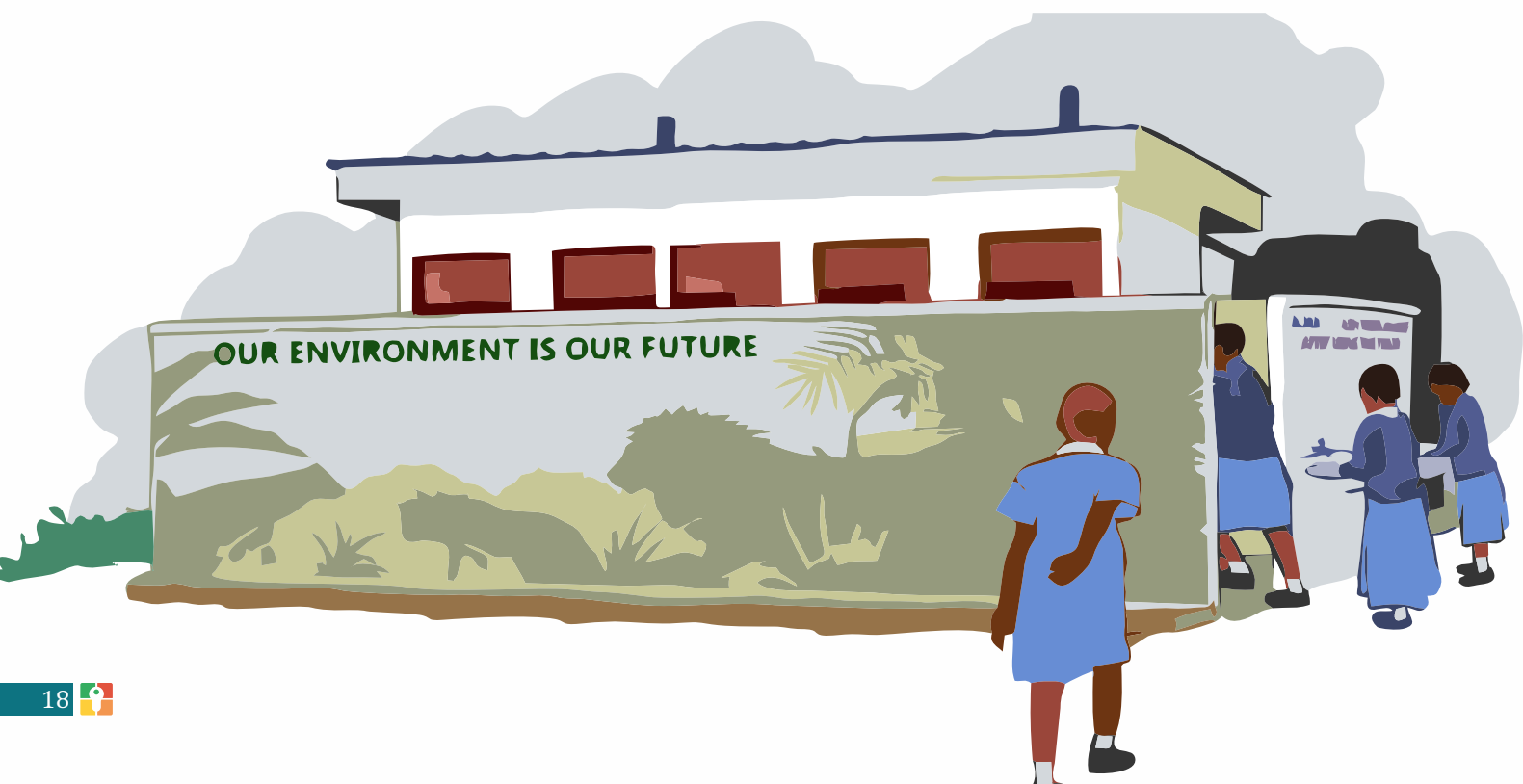
come in, then these opportunities need to be made available and also de-risked. In fact, the onus lies on the government to provide an enabling environment for the business of FSM to take off with partners of repute having an intent to contribute in the sector.”

Priya emphasized the necessity of breaking down FSM into components. She said that though it was likely to have a few large players in the arena, yet there would be a lot of smaller firms too who might come in to do their parts in the sanitation value chain. “Again, communicating these opportunities and ensuring that the corporates know that the execution of projects will be done to achieve the desired impact are critical.”

Priya highlighted the role of implementation partners in the space besides the importance of the quality of implementation. “Most of the companies that we have dealt with in the past have burnt their fingers in the toilet construction itself and we have somehow this strange situation where we now have to go back and dispel their fears. Besides, it is something the implementation partners have to take the responsibility for.”

“The next most important consideration is that of the human element being brought into the ambit of implementation. How do we ensure that the solution that we are creating is also demanded by those who it is being created for so as to guarantee the sustainability of the intervention?”

Priya underscored the role that was expected of ISC and NFSSM alliance in not just creating the buzz and excitement around FSM, but also in enabling the entire





Krishna highlighting the need of a deeper price in the actual framework of the contract entered into by the municipalities towards FSSM.

ecosystem including the market making for business in sanitation.

“I think there are two kinds of cases that one needs to collectively present to the companies. One is the business case and the other, impact case. We cannot sell anything to the corporates unless we know that there are also partners on the ground who are capable and likely to deliver on their promises in terms of execution.”

Priya then elaborated the different components of FSM as a project and the ways and means to get corporates interested in it. “What we can do to get companies like L & T and others into this space is to ensure that they operate at scale; the government provide them an assurance that their businesses run without any bureaucratic hurdles; the implementation partners work in tandem to complete projects with the intended impact; and newer and higher standards around quality be created to help sustain their interest in the intervention”, Priya explained.

Priya then talked about such companies as had funded sanitation in the past and FSM then became a natural extension of the investments that they would have already made. “You are not going to see large commitments here; but these are smaller companies which are critical to ensuring that the projects themselves have that FSM component in them.”

Interestingly, Priya also suggested a new paradigm for the FSM business when she explored the potential that the transport and IT companies had towards playing a catalytic role in the space. Besides the financial institutions whose role she thought was crucial, IT companies according to her might get interested in supporting the government with infrastructure to manage these complex projects.

Lastly, Priya hinted at companies which besides being interested in CSR as a compliance cared about social impact. “So, we can go to them with a case to say that well, an x1000 jobs can be created within the entire FSM ecosystem and that is why instead of just funding

construction and tailoring and whatever else, as this is a sector that is going to grow, they should look at it through the lenses of skilling, behaviour change and some of the other components of sanitation”, Priya suggested.

Priya summed her thoughts with three takeaways—An ecosystem for FSM as business; necessity to have all the partners committed to the task of execution; and creation of individual cases for the companies to make an investment.

Reacting to Priya, Madhu said that FSM was a tricky business, a dilemma. “It is not a large infrastructural project; it is quite decentralized, so needs to be implemented by the local ULBs. Citizen’s engagement is important; however, it is really about making sure that there is a supply chain of good sustainable constituents that carry it on.”

“In fact, FSM is a case for the ULBs to implement. You do set up the infrastructure, but you depend on the municipalities to ensure—that there is a regular and consistent flow of sludge into these treatment facilities; that the desludgers are regulated; and that the households know what their responsibilities are.”

“it does impinge a lot on what the ULBs have to take the responsibility for as far as setting up a business of FSM is concerned and it is way more complex than anything



that involves the individual household toilets or public latrines”, Madhu remarked.

Madhu admitted having difficulty in roping in large companies into the business of FSM because of the fragmented and decentralized nature of it as also the transaction cost in terms of personnel being too high. However, she was quick to add that since the work was of vital nature and could not be deferred or avoided, it had to be taken up at scale. Madhu referred to the Secretary, Government of India having shared the government's intent to set up some five thousand FSTPs over the next 5-6 years to substantiate her point.

Responding to a question that whether there were other sectors or industries that had undergone a similar phase of fluidity in the past, Aloka said that when her institution dealt with the renewables and energy efficiencies, everyone questioned if they had any products per se and expressed inability to assess the risks that were involved in lending for a 10 to 15 years' period for want of trust.

“Today, if one visits banks including HSBC, the energy efficiency financing is found growing and also it is one of their biggest focusses under sustainable finance. Quite like renewables and energy efficiencies, therefore, FSM as sector may also evolve given that it is imperative and none of us can shy away from it”, Aloka remarked.

Aloka then touched upon another issue that was of great importance to the sector. She said that when she

managed grants, she'd noticed a huge requirement of the guarantees and felt that the aid agencies had an important role to play in that space. “Right now, we do not have a regulatory framework allowing for such guarantees to flow to the lenders to facilitate WASH or FSM financing. However, I am glad that ISC-FICCI and their partners are already in conversation with the relevant ministry in the government to explore the possibility of a small proportion of the 2% grant being used for guarantees to enable financing to boost WASH including FSM in the country”, Aloka summed up.

Regarding innovative financing, Priya informed that they were coming up with a report on it and then went on to discuss the two aspects that she thought were related. The first, from a compliance perspective, which meant that the companies concerned had the confidence in project, from the proposal stage itself, the deficit of which had the potential to put an end to the project even before it got initiated. “So, compliance is absolutely a hygiene factor and ensuring that we are getting a legal opinion on how to structure this support is crucial”, Priya commented.

Priya then also hinted at the necessity to produce these demonstration models with trusted corporate partners and entities like ISC who she thought were trustworthy and favourably poised to take such a conversation forward.





Panel Discussion
India Sanitation Conclave 2019
Health Benefits and
Inclusivity in Sanitation

Health Benefits and Inclusivity in Sanitation



The Chair and Members of the Panel at India Sanitation Conclave 2019



*"To her [Florence Nightingale] chiefly I owed the awakening to the fact that sanitation is the supreme goal of medicine its foundation and its crown."
Elizabeth Blackwell, Pioneer Work In Opening The Medical Profession To Women*



Lack of sanitation leads to disease, as was first noted scientifically in 1842 in Chadwick's seminal "Report on an inquiry into the sanitary condition of the labouring population of Great Britain"¹. "A less scientifically rigorous but nonetheless professionally significant indicator of the impact on health of poor sanitation was provided in 2007, when readers of the British Medical Journal voted sanitation the most important medical milestone since 1840.

The diseases associated with poor sanitation are particularly correlated with poverty and infancy and alone account for about 10% of the global burden of disease². At any given time, close to half of the urban populations of Asia, Africa and Latin America have a disease associated with poor sanitation, hygiene, and water.

Further, diarrhoeal diseases are the most important of the faeco-oral diseases globally, causing around 1.6-2.5 million deaths annually,

¹ Chadwick E. Report on an inquiry into the sanitary condition of the labouring population of Great Britain. London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office; 1842. 279

² Prüss-Ustün A, Bos R, Gore F, Bartram J. Safer water, better health: costs, benefits and sustainability of interventions to protect and promote health. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2008. 60



Krishnan Hariharan of Dasra Highlights How Faecal Sludge Management is Important If One Wishes to Complete the Entire Value Chain of Sanitation to Reap the Health Benefits

many of them among children under five years old living in developing countries including India^{3,4}.

Systematic reviews suggest that improved sanitation can reduce rates of diarrhoeal diseases by 32%-37%,^{5,6}. While many of the studies included in those reviews could not rigorously disaggregate the specific effects of sanitation from the overall effects of wider water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions, a longitudinal cohort study in Salvador, Brazil, found that an increase in sewerage coverage from 26% to 80% of the target population resulted in a 22% reduction of diarrhoea prevalence in children under 3 years of age; in those areas where the baseline diarrhoea prevalence had been highest and safe sanitation coverage lowest, the prevalence rate fell by 43%⁷.

Looking at our own country specifically, the proportion of children under five years of age who

are reported stunted (height-for-age) and underweight (weight-for-age), respectively, is 38.4% and 35.7% (NFHS-4). These two nutritional indicators are certainly linked to WASH intervention with universal coverage as evidenced by a slew of studies though not without interesting debate and discussion⁸.

Set against the above background and to explore the prospects for a fuller involvement of the health sector in sanitation in India, an illustrious panel comprising of members with impressive credentials in public health and sanitation, at the just concluded India Sanitation Conclave 2019, under the aegis of India Sanitation Coalition (ISC) at Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), explored the premise on which to build a case for achieving the much needed coupling between health and sanitation. The following were the excerpts of the discussion,

³ Mathers CD, Lopez AD, Murray CJL. The burden of disease and mortality by condition: data, methods, and results for 2001. In: Lopez AD, Mathers CD, Ezzati M, Jamison DT, Murray CJL, editors. *Global burden of disease and risk factors*. New York: Oxford University Press; 2006. pp. 45-240.

⁴ Kosek M, Bern C, Guerrant RL. The global burden of diarrhoeal disease, as estimated from studies published between 1992 and 2000. *Bull World Health Organ*. 2003; 81:197-204.

⁵ Fewtrell L, Kaufmann RB, Kay D, Enanoria W, Haller L, et al. Water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions to reduce diarrhoea in less developed countries: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Lancet Infect Dis*. 2005; 5:42-52

⁶ Waddington H, Snilstveit B. Effectiveness and sustainability of water, sanitation, and hygiene interventions in combating diarrhoea. *J Dev Effect*. 2009; 1:295-335

⁷ Barreto ML, Genser B, Strina A, Teixeira MG, Assis AM, et al. Effect of city-wide sanitation programme on reduction in rate of childhood diarrhoea in northeast Brazil: assessment by two cohort studies. *Lancet*. 2007; 370:1622-28.

⁸ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/link-between-sanitation-stunting-questioned/article22637479.ece>

which was presided over by Neeraj Jain, Country Director India, PATH.

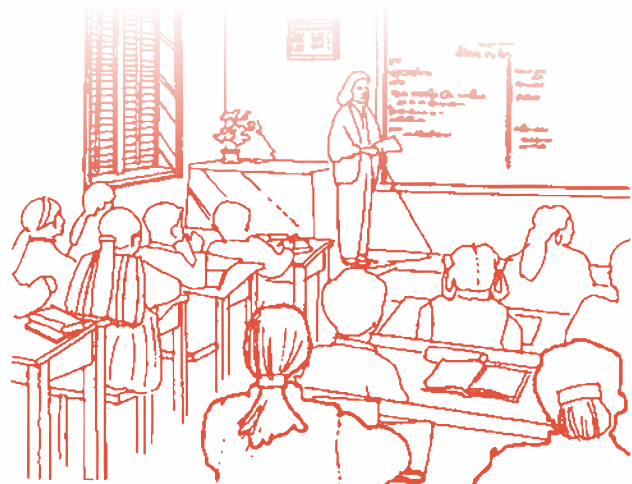
Sanitation is complex subject and when related to public health, it gets all the more complex. It affects many but championed by a few. At the outset of the panel discussion, the panel chair recounted one of his early experiences of working in the sector, to his fellow panellists, with revelations that vindicated the above concern in no uncertain terms. The chair while holding a public meeting in one of the villages in India several years ago had encountered an individual who he wanted to appreciate the health benefits of not defecating in the open. The chair conceded by being stumped by this young man's response that he'd found the practice as being completely convenient and benevolent, without impacting his health. The young man in support of his contention had then cited the instance of his father and grandfather who according to him had defecated in the open too without really jeopardising their health. Interestingly, the panel chair admitted that it had taken him some years of working in the sector to learn a suitable, fact-based counter response that might help this individual change his behaviour and adopt the safe sanitation practices benefitting his health.

Taking the discussion forward, the panel chair requested the members to think from a twin perspective- "things that have happened in the past and the gaps that exist and warrant redressal on priority". He wanted the deliberations to flow vis-à-vis an understanding that health interventions in India had been more curative than preventive with merely vaccination at the core of the latter and that WASH never got the attention it merited in the scheme of things.

Replying to a question on how she would prefer to connect health with sanitation, Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, Population Foundation of India said the biggest gaps covering both the public and private healthcare spaces in India were about a brazen lack of attention to preventive and promotive healthcare initiatives and programmes including those on sanitation. "Fifty percent of the

disease burden of the country would have been reduced had the India country programme on health, during the last fifty-sixty years of its existence, just about included WASH interventions within the frame of the preventive healthcare", Poonam remarked. She expressed her deep anguish over the fact that the country had not chosen to invest in behaviour change interventions in the space including the initiatives to inform the community regarding the consequences of poor sanitation on public and environmental health. She was amazed as to how the global and Indian economists alike had missed to figure out for decades as to what had actually prevented the Indian economy to grow at a rate the country's top political leadership had wished for despite there being data on maternal and child mortality and morbidity gleaned through the five countrywide surveys that the country had witnessed during these periods.

Poonam then referred to the 'Asian Enigma' according to which "in the public imagination, the home of the malnourished child was sub-Saharan Africa. But the league tables clearly showed that the worst-affected region was not Africa but South Asia. Just over 30% of Africa's children were underweight, but the corresponding figure for South Asia was over 50%. And in Bangladesh and India, the proportion of children malnourished was very significantly higher than in even the poorest countries of the sub-Sahara⁹. She therefore clearly saw a link between the diarrhoeal and other water and sanitation related diseases, and open



⁹ <https://www.unicef.org/pon96/nuenigma.htm>



defecation the elimination of which she thought could certainly bring about a sizable improvement in the proportion of children who might be underweight and / or stunted in the country.

Besides, Poonam highlighted an important gender issue around the pregnant women who would get constrained not to eat as much they had needed to during their pregnancies for, they could not possibly defecate in the open to relieve themselves before the fall of dusk leading to increased maternal morbidity and mortality. "Poor maternal health means poor child health in the subsequent generation and a vicious cycle results from the clutches of which it is not easy to free. WASH interventions taken up in the right earnest have the potential to improve not just health indicators of the country but also its GDP", she remarked.

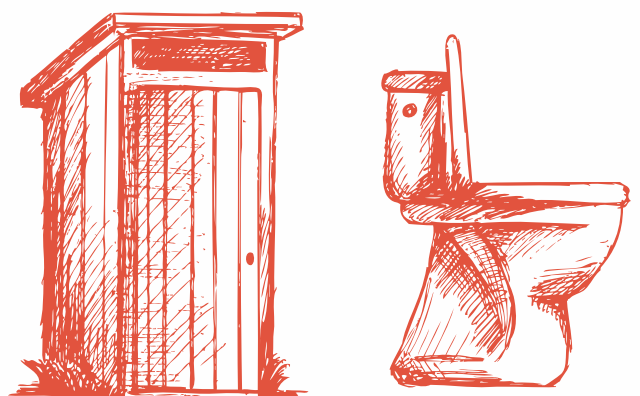
Mohini Daljeet Singh, CEO of Max India Foundation and a social worker and an educationist, who has worked for the underprivileged on the health platform benefitting over twenty-six lakh beneficiaries covering seven hundred plus locations and partnering with over four hundred NGOs, agreed with her fellow panellist that the country had woken up to sanitation and even to health late and sanitation indeed was an integral component of health.

Mohini then shared the background of her organisation, Max India Foundation (MIF) which was into the segment of healthcare-for-the-underprivileged for quite some time and

undertook programmes starting from health education, preventive care through vaccination and disease screening through regular health camps to curative care including surgeries.

Mohini shared MIF's Dhakrani (a village in Vikas Nagar block of the Dehradun district, Uttarakhand) experience which the organisation had adopted in 2014 in order to develop it into a 'model village' impacting quality living and holistic health. A baseline study in the village brought to light a major problem in the form of lack of proper sanitation facilities in the village which prompted the organisation to develop a sustainable underground sanitation network for the village thereby achieving the overall goal of safe sanitation and holistic health for all the villagers. "The programme is in exit phase post achieving its objectives", she shared.

"Dhakrani presented a major challenge in terms of sanitation with lack of a proper sewerage along with improper garbage disposal. Wastewater accumulated in the open drains on the streets provided a breeding ground for the mosquitoes and flies, subsequently spreading diseases. This wastewater also contaminated the drinking water supply. To address the issue, the foundation executed an underground sewerage system connected to each household with an aim to cover most of the drains with concrete with no standing wastewater and no plastic/garbage blocking the drains or streets. The villagers were taught a proper way of garbage disposal through sensitisation and practical implementation by distributing dustbins and encouraging segregation of waste at the household level. Two tractor trolleys were assigned to collect the garbage from



each household and public dust bins were installed to avoid the littering of streets. The organic waste collected was composted and the plastic one recycled. This helped in changing the mindset of the villagers, and the surrounding areas becoming clean and hygienic" Mohini elaborated.

Mohini shared that she had drawn her inspiration from a sanitation project in Punjab where some non-resident Indians had funded the entire sanitation project of a village, whereby each household had been connected through a proper sewerage system including an STP to keep the village clean and fully sanitised. She explained as to why she had thought it would be desirable to have a project of sanitation in Dhakrani was because it might well just be a lasting legacy and testament to the foundation's work in the village which was already benefiting through once-a-month multi-speciality health clinic and two health camps per week, supported by the foundation.

"Dhakrani sanitation project was one of the toughest challenges that I had faced in recent years and I am glad that we are in the last phase of it, and also pleased to share that our mantra of "Swachh Raho, Swasth Raho" has really come of age benefitting 2300 households equivalent to a population of around 15000", remarked Mohini.

"What was most gratifying to note was that post these sanitation interventions in Dhakrani whereby rallies with the help of school children and ASHA workers were organised at the behest of

the foundation to clean the village, the womenfolk responded with deep gratitude to the foundation", Mohini added.

On the question of what her own assessments were of the government health centres; a primary health centre for instance, Mohini expressed her disappointment with the stakeholders both on the supply and demand sides of the government programme. "The government have not done enough despite people's demand and households are not willing to pay even though it may be a paltry sum for the maintenance of a basic facility the capital cost of which has been borne by the government or a private player", she commented.

It was a moment to cherish for the panellists and the conclave audience alike when Mohini shared that their foundation had spent around ₹15 crores in five years in Dhakrani out of which ₹9 crores were utilised for sanitation alone to create a model which could well be replicated adopting a local and community driven development approach that would give control of development decisions and resources to the community groups and representatives of the local government.

On the issue of faecal sludge management (FSM), the chair had noted with interest the ministry's attention to the intervention and requested the next panellist, Krishnan Hariharan, who led Dasra's goal of improving sanitation in India as the Project Lead for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's (BMGF) Water and Sanitation



Neeraj Jain, Country Director India, PATH and the Panel Chair Giving his Opening Remarks

program, to focus on FSM in the rural context and then if possible in urban as well.

Krishnan was pretty sure that ODF as an accomplishment was great, but he was surer that faecal sludge management was equally important if one wished to complete the entire value chain of sanitation to reap the health benefits of sanitation for collective outcomes.

Krishnan did some straight talking and said that when it came to health and sanitation, the burden was disproportionate both for the urban poor and gender. So, FSM and FSTP offered to address these gaps effectively at a much lower cost than what one would incur if there were attempts to connect them through a sewer network which was way too time-consuming and cost intensive.

"What is important to recognise in this context is that a solution through FSM is simple and effective with a shorter timeline and also less capital-intensive", Krishna remarked.

"Even from an urban perspective we know that we may not have enough space as also not sufficient ability to set up an STP to treat enough waste to make it operationally viable", Krishnan further added.

Thereafter, Krishnan made an extremely valid point when he said that for an FSM intervention to be effective and scalable, what mattered was an apt narrative about sanitation that would focus as to who transported the waste and how it was being treated before one got to address the issue of waste-to-profit. However, he sounded sceptical when he said that the government had put a lot of capital behind FSM and FSTP and that some 450 odd FSTPs were being commissioned, but their support would be required on a sustained basis especially in terms of providing the land, etc. "Besides, we do not have too many operators in the country today who are operating these kinds of technology, however, the space certainly promises to provide a plethora of opportunities for the well-



being of the urban poor and gender", said Krishnan.

Anand Rudra, Senior Advisor, Water, Sanitation, Hygiene at USAID said that it was a challenge to attribute health benefits to safe sanitation. "When we do sanitation, we need to know what the health benefits are and when we do health, we need to understand whether sanitation is the underlying cause of the health outcome or it is merely an afterthought.

"Along with Gates Foundation, USAID is supporting the government on Swachh Bharat. And whatever USAID is doing in India and across 180 of its missions around the world in WASH, health is an integral part of the intervention" Anand remarked.

Anand conceded that hygiene would fall off the radar more often than not when a WASH programme got executed and that happened because of the fact that hygiene had ended up becoming just a part of the holistic WASH education programme with no exclusive consideration being given to it from a programme perspective.

Anand further cited the USAID supported school WASH interventions where improved facility for water and sanitation certainly impacted the health outcome whereas hygiene education including the menstrual hygiene management advisory for the adolescent girls helped improve the school enrolment and reduce absenteeism.

"We are fortunate to have been in engagement with the Union Ministry of Health since 2003 along with Population Foundation of India and other illustrious partners working in the health sector, to participate in a dialogue that would have later culminated into the rolling out of National Urban Health Mission (NUHM) in 2013; and it took us nearly a decade to persuade the ministry that an integral part of the urban mission's objective had a deep relatedness with water and sanitation." Anand said.

Anand was pretty clear in his thoughts when he said that there existed a huge scope for hygiene to be addressed exclusively and not merely as part of the 'W' and 'S' within WASH to create the desired health impact.



On the issue of convergence within the sector to address the issues of priority, the panel chair expressed his deep concern and said that it was vital that we'd stepped out of our silos and started working together to bring about a convergence between health, nutrition, water and sanitation and hygiene despite there being separate portfolios of ministries in our country to deal with them independently.

Responding to a request to hit the "blind spot", made by the panel chair, Ravi Bhatnagar, Director External Affairs and Partnerships at RB - Africa, Middle East, South Asia brought in for attention a framework for intervention that included- prevent, promote and treat. "If we invest significantly in prevention and promotion of health, then the out-of-pocket expense on treatment shall go down, considerably impacting even the GDP of the country", Ravi opined.

"There are some very some very good practices and learning from the past programmes supported by the Gates Foundation of which I would like to mention Avahan, the programme that was launched in 2003 by the Gates Foundation. Avahan provided funding and support to targeted HIV prevention programs in six Indian states and along the national trucking routes". One interesting



Poonam Muttreja, Executive Director, PFI Argues that the Biggest Gaps Covering Both Public and Private Healthcare Spaces in India were about a Brazen Lack of Attention to Preventive and Promotive Healthcare Programmes Including those on Sanitation

publication that emerged out of these programmes was on "use it or lose it". Ravi was actually referring to the accumulation of data that were to be used for call to action to create an impact.

Ravi was appreciative of a large volume of quantitative data being generated in the sector to prove an existing theory or build a new one, however, he was equally concerned about the lack of ethnographic research data that according to him had the greater potential to inform the programme designs leading to impressive outcomes.

Ravi then made an interesting reference to a USAID supported study called point-of-use-of water (POU). He said if the POU could be taken care of, the diarrhoeal deaths among children under 5 would go down and the vital indicators on child morbidity and mortality would accordingly improve. In the same context, he mentioned the under-served strategy of the pulse polio programme that was implemented with a last mile outreach approach to deal with the polio cases from two districts in the eastern and northern India.

Highlighting the issue of malnourishment among children in the country, Ravi remarked that the problem was bigger than generally understood and that advocacy initiatives for improving nutrition in the first 1000 days to support childhood development and adult health were needed to free the population from this spiteful cycle. He also mentioned regarding the breastfeeding of children

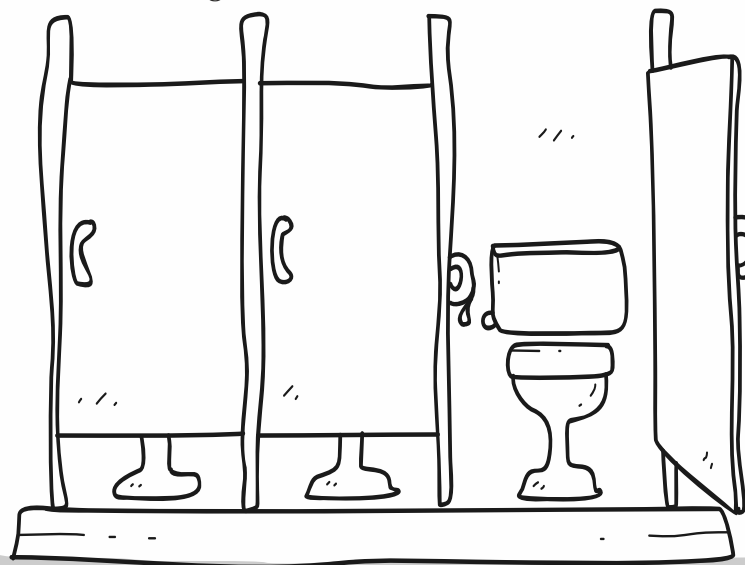
under 3 years of age who were breastfed within one hour of birth, colostrum feeding in other words, the myths around them and the necessity to bust them to improve the nutritional status of the children,

"We need to work together and not in silos and fast track our programmes to achieve the intended results", Ravi summed up.

"Behaviour change will continue to remain an important cornerstone in public health programmes in India", Poonam concluded and thereafter the discussion was thrown open to the audience.

Responding to an audience question on microinsurance in health and sanitation, Vedika Bhandarkar from Water.Org said that linking financing to health insurance was a great idea that was tried in the past but it could not be scaled much as the challenge was really the manufacturer, the underwriter of insurance and there were impediments on account of claim settlements. "However, the government insurance schemes including "Ayushman Bharat" are an instrument that seem to have attempted to address this issue to a large extent" the panel agreed.

To conclude, there were three important takeaways from the discussion- 1. preventive and promotive healthcare initiatives with behaviour change as the underlying premise for collective outcomes; 2. realistic and functional convergence between departments within government who deal with water and sanitation, health and nutrition; and 3. hygiene as an integral component of WASH meriting exclusive treatment.





Panel Discussion
India Sanitation Conclave 2019
Public Private
Partnerships in Sanitation

Public Private Partnerships in Sanitation



The Chair and Members of the First Panel at India Sanitation Conclave 2019



“Our aim is to reach everyone, everywhere with clean water, good sanitation services and hygiene education. But we can't do it alone. In order to strengthen the WASH sector and improve policy and practice we form partnerships with stakeholders at all levels...WaterAid”



This is more than evident now that the private sector organisations, international development partners including bilateral and multilateral donors, CSOs, national and international NGOs, CBOs, networks and alliances, and advocacy and campaigning organisations, through partnerships of various proportions and significance, provided the much-needed impetus that the flagship initiative of India on sanitation demanded from time to time to become a citizen's movement; a movement that witnessed change on the ground paving the way for an open defecation free India well before the stipulated timeline.

India Sanitation Coalition (ISC) Awards Ceremony and Conclave (concluded during April 25-26, 2019), which was a conscientious and deliberate attempt by the coalition to recognize and reward excellence in the sector, also commemorated these partnerships of value by releasing a best practices compendium under the combined aegis of ISC and the Union Ministry of Drinking Water this year. The publication series of ISC "Business of Change" titled "Partnerships in Sanitation" typified instances of partnerships that led to interventions addressing a host of issues critical to securing a Swachh Bharat.



The Chair, Naina Lal Kidwai Giving her Opening Remarks

In order to dig deep into the subject of partnerships in sanitation, the ISC conclave sought to engage with corporates through one of their panel discussions which could bring strategic thinking to the table enabling a learning that was vital to the sustainability of Swachh Bharat. The following were the excerpts of the discussion.

Ms Naina Lal Kidwai, Chairperson, ISC presided over the proceedings and at the outset of the discussion itself underlined the theme of the ISC Conclave, which was partnership, and highlighted that absolutely top class corporates, who were also leaders in their respective sectors of industry, were there to share their views and opinions on Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Sanitation. The chair sought to know as to what these companies were engaged with in the past in Sanitation.

Kanupriya Saigal, Group Head CSR, DCM Shriram before embarking upon the topic clearly stressed that their company had corporate social responsibility (CSR) at its core covering their entire operations. They were working in three states, namely Gujarat, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh and their work covered both infrastructure and behaviour change communication (BCC) interventions for collective outcomes. This largely covered the area of School Sanitation. DCM Shriram was absolutely vocal in putting forward their view that PPP was needed besides collaboration with an entity like ISC who specialized in forging collaborations to achieve the intended objectives through suitably designed

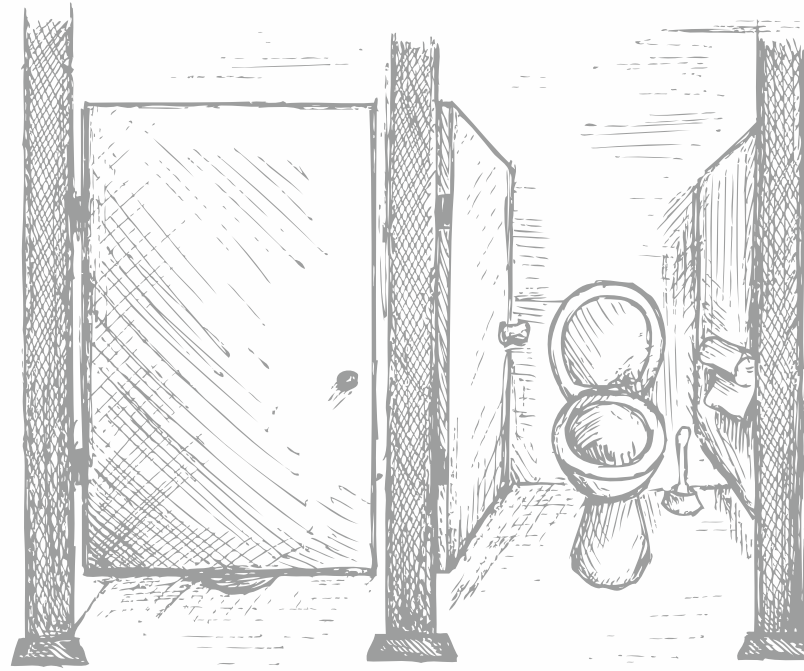
social development programmes. Their only concern was that it was the citizen's participation which was lacking as they thought the exquisite infrastructure was there; scores of dedicated and committed corporates to render an excellent service were also there. However, in an attempt to ensure citizen's participation in the sanitation programme the company rightly highlighted their Swachhta Sathi initiative, in collaboration with ISC, which they thought might come in handy. Under this initiative, the company employees were required to adopt a village each so as to be able to engage with the communities to educate them on the advantages of safe sanitation practices and hygiene. The said initiative was launched in Kota.



The Chair, Naina Lal Kidwai and Chief Executive, Lakshmi Sampath Goyal, India Sanitation Coalition Felicitating Partner Company Reckitt Benckiser India for their Outstanding Contribution to Swachh Bharat

The chair was prompt enough to highlight the element of partnership in the said initiative which led to success.

Nimish Shah, Director Partnerships and Advocacy, Hindustan Unilever Limited (HUL) stressed the importance of sanitation from the health and environmental perspectives. Sanitation being compromised would, according to them, lead to poor public and environmental health. The reference of Suvidha project was brought in to explain the lighthouse project which had the potential for scalability to create a difference on the ground. Referring to the Suvidha model operational in Ghatkopar, Mumbai, HUL said that few more such projects were coming up in partnership with TATA trusts and HSBC and those centres were likely to be up and running by the end of current year. According to HUL, Suvidha centres operated on the circular economy model for water reuse & conservation. Looking at the growing urbanisation in the country, the company thought that a few thousand Suvidha Centres might be needed to create an appreciable difference in the provision of sanitary services for the urban poor. The panel chair was prompt enough to react by saying that the first Suvidha Centre at Mumbai did provide an opportunity for the other corporates to come forward and take it up and to adapt to the learning from this pioneering intervention and build more such centres as a means to contribute to the sector. She also mentioned that it was heartening to see TATA trusts and HSBC having already seized their opportunities to build more such centres. The initiative, according to the panel, bore extra significance given that it had attempted to address the problems of slum dwellers in urban India. Although the discussion thus far had exuded



an empowering positivity, yet HUL was candid enough to admit that when it came to partnerships with the municipal corporations vis-à-vis these initiatives, there were barriers and challenges which needed to be overcome with persistent efforts and perseverance on the corporate's part.

Ashwini Saxena, Chief Operations Officer at JSW Foundation was not willing to accept sanitation as an issue to be taken up in isolation from the related issues of water and environment especially in the rural settings of India. This was based on their experience of having been working in more than 25-26 states in the country. The foundation made a lot of sense from an altogether different perspective of sanitation by the way of looking at water management and agricultural livelihood as being linked to sanitation besides highlighting the importance of generating wealth from waste including from the wastewater and agricultural waste. They'd started with toilet construction and then moved on to solid waste management and processing of waste to generate energy. They cited very successful models of both IIHTs, and public toilets, linked to biodigester plants to generate energy, more precisely cooking gas for domestic use. They also mentioned that certain wetlands in the JSW factory catchment areas were developed and then connected to the source of grey water being generated from the adjoining rural communities. It served to enhance the livelihood



options for the rural folks besides ensuring a safe disposal of the waste to protect the environment. The panel chair was prompt enough to appreciate the initiative which typically exemplified the circular economy model to generate wealth from waste to support the rural community towards an improved health and superior quality of life. She also indicated that this might well present an opportunity for the corporates and entrepreneurs in the sector with potential to run successful businesses out of it. Ashwini was quick to add that they had adopted a 360-degree approach towards safe sanitation in as much as all their factory kitchens, which fed over 6000-7000 heads on a daily basis, generated waste that was measured and monitored and then bio-digested to generate energy for various useful purposes.

Mabel Abraham of Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T) shared their integrated community development programme which was operational for the last four years where sanitation was a component besides the components of water, health and livelihood. Having served three states and six watershed communities and over two thousand individual households with a toilet, L&T rightly highlighted that sanitation was not merely construction of toilet but way beyond. According to them, it raised a host of questions: Whether the demand for the said infrastructure existed? Was sustainability going to be an issue beyond the exit of the programme in a certain catchment? Was water an issue affecting safe sanitation practices being adopted in the communities? Being an

infrastructure company, L&T were hopeful to templatize toilet construction including an increased awareness regarding the availability of the low-cost technology which could possibly be made use of to increase the coverage and usage of the toilet infrastructure. Responding to a question by the panel chair that how L&T might support the young entrepreneurs who needed to be helped in their respective businesses using low-cost technologies to support the rural communities in securing access to and usage of the sanitation infrastructure, the company highlighted the services they were offering to the local municipalities in faecal sludge and septage management (FSSM) and shared that they were looking to upstream and support more such opportunities in the time to come.

Kashmira Shah, CSR Advisor at Nayara Energy, at the outset, emphasised the importance of safe sanitation as their key developmental initiative, as for them, safe sanitation would mean improved health and improved educational attainments. They therefore tried to put sanitation underlying all their programmes. They also mentioned that they were working in water-deficient areas and where the challenges were also very different. Having contributed in the initial phase towards the construction and behaviour change model, the corporate was currently looking for opportunities in the maintenance and treatment parts of the sanitation value chain. By and large, they saw themselves as being poised for catalytic actions in the sector forging partnership opportunities both



Kanupriya Saigal, Group Head CSR, DCM Shriram Arguing Why Citizen's Participation was Non-negotiable for Swachh Bharat



with other private corporates and the public sector undertakings to provide context-based solutions benefiting the sector and people at large. According to them, the like-minded corporates and model-based holistic solutions were the key to partnerships with potential to succeed. Nayara Energy were also prompted to highlight their initiative of Captain Swachh which was built around their employees assuming the role of sanitation messengers driving the best practices in sanitation in a sustained manner for behaviour change which can be induced for collective outcomes only if pursued persistently with multiple cycles of intervention. Of added importance in the context were the proposed efforts to train the local village cohorts to continue with the action for there were evidences that any IEC that was undertaken with local resources was more likely to be effective than the ones being done utilising the external resources. The chair concluded the round saying that there was a common refrain here as to how the corporates looked at sanitation not just as a one-off

initiative with sanitation per se but with a host of externalities including its health benefits, etc. Besides, the chair was pleased to note that the employee programmes of DCM Shriram and Nayara Energy were picking up to deliver as expected. The panel chair was candid enough to admit that there was another commonality between the corporates that barring some, most others were not really there for business-in-sanitation but because they needed to reach out to the community in the catchment of their operations to stay connected with the programme which they believed was in everyone's interest including their employees. Besides, she explained her keenness to understand the modality of engagement for the corporates in sanitation for she was conscious of the need for it especially in view of the SBM phase one coming to an end on October 2, 2019 when India would be declared open defecation free. The chair persisted with her query to understand what it might take for that eco-environment to be created to facilitate



Kashmira Shah, CSR Advisor at Nayara Energy, Emphasizing the Relevance of Safe Sanitation to Improved Health and Educational attainments

entrepreneurs, small businesses and big players to create opportunities for business services in sanitation.

Kanupriya responded by highlighting the significance of sanitation as an area that had the potential for investment independent of any enablers such as water. They believed that as water was a precious resource which was becoming more and more scarce every day, the Nextgen toilets or sanitation infrastructures were actually going to have to function without water or at the very least with reduced availability of water. So, the entrepreneurs who were willing to take it up in sanitation might need to address these issues as a prelude to a business venture. The established corporates irrespective of whether sanitation was a core area for CSR programming within their organisations might come together to fund an entrepreneur such as a start-up like GenRobotics, for instance, that provided a robotic device with a manual interface that could go deep and look into the cleaning manholes, thus negating the risks of human scavenging and the associated societal costs, including health hazards, burden to the public purse and social ostracization, amongst others. So, the panel was also quite convinced that sanitation had shown tendencies to extend beyond infrastructure creation and behaviour change to innovations that had the potential to change the whole gamut of things in the sector with huge social impact and that the corporates had a major role to play therein.

To the question of how there could be a business opportunity in the sanitation space, Ashwini emphasized the need for both demand and supply in the area that could drive people's willingness to pay for the sanitation services. He further elaborated that to be able to create that demand there were two things that were needed-self-awareness and if it was missing or not optimal then there should be incentivization to create and sustain the demand. Any business proposition in a market economy according to them had two elements, one, a demand that still remained to be generated and was crucial to people having the ability and willingness to pay for the sanitation service and then there had to be a policy to take care of the market failures. The foundation believed that although there was enough that had been done on the supply side of the programme, yet on the demand side much still remained to be done specifically to take care of the market failures. They went on to quote the instance of creation of a world class, all-women toilet infrastructure by them on the Mumbai railway platform which couldn't be bought-in by the municipal corporation for want of a pricing point as also a suitable policy in place to take care of the maintenance, etc. According to the panel, the public toilet construction and an incentive mechanism for the community to run it were the key to running a successful model in this space.

The panel chair then concluded by saying that there was a need to create that ecosystem enabling



the small businesses and entrepreneurs to thrive, and quoted as to how some of the municipalities across cities in India were already encouraging that which was also evident from the fact that ISC had had a significant number of sanitation awardees from those areas particularly in solid waste management in the recent past. So, this typically exemplified an instance of enabling entrepreneurship by a public entity benefitting all concerned.

Nimish, however, had a different perspective to offer on the sanitation entrepreneurship model whereby they quoted having published the facts that if the wastes generated from out of a 100 million toilets constructed in the country could be aggregated, it had the potential to meet the 18% and 6% requirement of nitrogen and phosphate, respectively, of the Indian agriculture. That according to HUL was the pie that warranted dissemination on suitable platforms to build an enabling environment for the sanitation entrepreneurs to come in and contribute. However, the use of human waste for Indian agriculture might not go down well with certain governments in the country so such unlocks were actually needed before any attempt to realise the full potential of the opportunity that existed in realistic terms should ideally be made.

L&T were pretty honest about the need for creative and innovative funding models to take the sanitation programme from mere toilet construction to behaviour change to seeding entrepreneurship in the space. The company cited some of the successful models of community led public health interventions (HIV AIDS, Pulse Polio, etc.) of the mid 1990s and 2000s where corporates had come together to create a difference leading to the plateauing of the disease incidence if not their decline or complete eradication and then argued that sanitation bore semblance to them as there existed opportunities here that were really long-term with potential for success.

Responding to the chair's query on what the panel thought of the opportunities that existed for the entrepreneurs in sanitation in terms of service, rather than the infrastructure and technology,



Kashmira responded citing the examples of Suidha Centre, an intervention discussed in the foregone paragraphs of the document, and remarked that it was really impressive to see the demand of the services being heightened in the community based on how the womenfolk had benefited in terms efficient washing of their clothes, conservation and reuse of the available water and the entire operations being less manual-intensive, etc. and a cross selling of the service products being offered by the centre. They argued that there were no compulsions to see sanitation only from the benevolent lens of the civil society and that it must really be viewed from a business perspective of services, with some risk capital put into it, where there were successful models waiting to be replicated.

Ashwini's final remarks were very interesting when he spoke of water, slowly but steadily moving out of the public space and transitioning into the private domain perhaps not in the right or ethical way. But as demands were natural, it happened. Sanitation too they expected might have the same fate to meet in the years to come. So, the crux according to them was the demand and the right policies around incentivising the same to bring about this much needed change towards meeting the requirements of SDG6.

The panel generally agreed that it was quite feasible for the corporates to create a workable model through diverse partnerships which could possibly be franchised out for value addition and

successful running as a business in the WASH space.

The above discussion certainly explores and contextualizes a central narrative in PPP in WASH besides showing promise to provide new insights and evidence when weighed against the challenges of urbanisation in India.

Urbanization is an integral part of the economic growth and as in most countries, India's urban areas make a major contribution to the country's economy. Indian cities contribute to about 2/3 of the economic output, host a growing share of the population and are the main recipients of FDI and the originators of innovation and technology and over the next two decades are projected to have an increase of population from 282 million to 590 million people¹.

Hence accompanying India's rapid economic growth will be a fundamental shift in terms of a massive urban transformation, possibly the largest

national urban transformation of the 21st century. This would pose unprecedented challenges to India's growing cities and towns in providing housing and infrastructure (water, sanitation, transportation, etc.), and addressing slums. So, Indian cities are certainly going to require a financial sustainability roadmap to be financially self-sufficient to support high-quality infrastructure and the delivery of services². PPP Shall hold the key then.

Besides, from the SBM perspective, as nearly a hundred million toilet infrastructures have already been created under phase one of the programme, their persistent use, maintenance and retrofitting, and treatment of waste are certainly going to be an issue with the passage of time warranting redressal on priority. And with public financing dwindling in the subsequent phases of the programme, in a post ODF arena, PPP to support these activities in the interest of a Swachh Bharat shall come in very handy.

¹ <http://www.worldbank.org/india-urbanization>

² Strategy for New India @ 75; November 2018; NITI Aayog





Panel Discussion
India Sanitation Conclave 2019
**Role of Media in
Sustaining ODF**



Role of Media in Sustaining ODF



The Chair and Members of the Panel at India Sanitation Conclave 2019



The media is a tool which contributes to the declaration, announcement, and spread of the opinions of various groups in the society by reflecting the opinion within itself and those belonging to the external environments, thus, provides an interaction between the rulers and ruled ones¹.



The media, the fourth pillar of democracy ensures that all people living in far off areas of the country are aware of what's happening in rest of it². Besides, it safeguards transparency in the working of all the other three systems-judiciary, executive and legislature. Therefore, the media, which connotes a whole range of meanings and perceptions for the public, should ideally be and also is in an auditing position vis-à-vis the actions of the other three pillars of democracy, including on sanitation, having gleaned

the knowledge from the stakeholders both on the supply and demand sides of the programmes to do their job with finesse and impact at large.

Through one of the panel discussions held at India Sanitation Conclave 2019, the media representatives themselves tried to figure out as to what extent had the media been able to sensitize the public on environmental sanitation and other related issues; did mass media allot adequate space and air-time for sanitation activities and

¹ Girgin, A. (2001). *Türk Basın Tarihi'nde Yerel Gazetecilik [Turkish Press History of Local Journalism]*. İstanbul, Turkey: İnkılap Yayınları.
² <https://www.voj.news/media-as-a-fourth-pillar-of-democracy/>



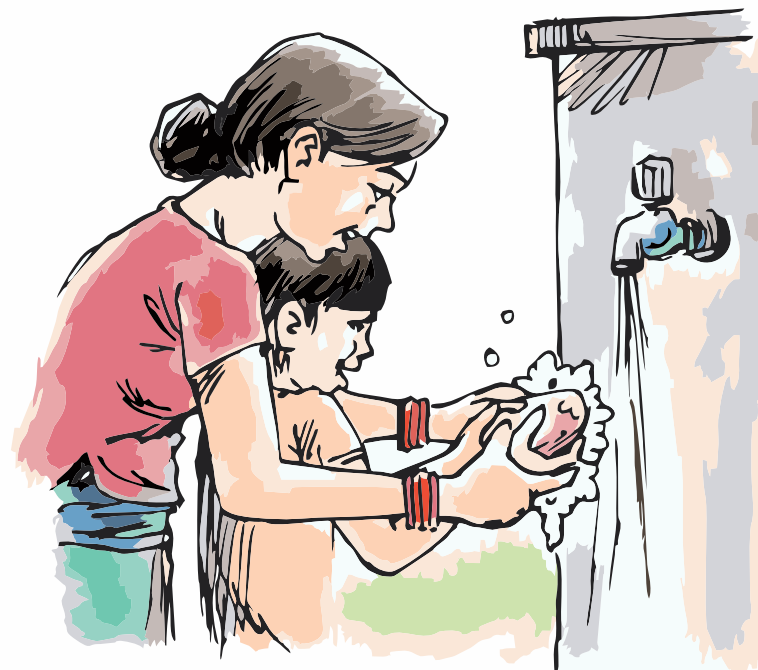
programmes; had the media done enough to generate the requisite, collective demand for sanitation infrastructure and services and; had media also succeeded in monitoring the delivery in one of the most ambitious programmes of development in India in recent years-Swachh Bharat Mission-which promised to equip more than 100 million households with toilets as also change the mindset of 1.32 billion people whose pre-dominant view of cleanliness was to keep the filth including the human faeces away from where they resided.

Setting the tone for discussion, Santosh Tiwari, Senior Director, Media Head, FICCI and also the panel chair, highlighted the importance of opportunities in sanitation economy in India and expressed his amazement at the issues of sanitation not being adequately covered by the media thus far. He went on to add that the very purpose of the panel discussion was to provide some takeaways for the panellists and audiences alike in terms of how the various aspects of sanitation should be covered by the media in the

country vindicating its position as the fourth pillar of democracy.

The panel chair was candid enough to share an interesting outcome of his ground level assessment of the effectiveness of media in covering sanitation and related issues, based on their outreach as also his experience at an executive jury meeting which sat to adjudicate the ISC Sanitation Awards in the media category that the regional media including those operating in the southern and western regions of the country were doing a fairer job than the groups with a national outreach and fervour. Without naming any brand, the panel chair admitted that these electronic and web-based channels had successfully attempted to bring to the fore issues in the sector which were important from a social standpoint besides showcasing them as potentially attractive for newer business propositions.

On the question of how media could promote sustainable sanitation both in urban and rural spaces, the panel chair himself responded by commenting that it went without saying that to be able to sell a story covering sanitation, irrespective of the degree of relevance it might have to the current context, to the editorial team is not easy. According to him, there weren't too many buyers for a sanitation story in the editorial teams across media groups in the country today.



Kaveree Bamzai, an independent journalist with more than thirty years of past experience at India Today, The Indian Express and The Times of India, responding to a question raised by the chairperson agreed that it was a challenge and shared how she had accepted it by way of picking up the multiple editions of India Today Safaigiri Awards and Singathon, a platform that showcased and felicitated the pioneering efforts of those who had led the change in cleanliness. Singathon Safaigiri awards were launched for different categories and widely publicised to solicit nominations through print publications and electronic media adverts. Kaveree recounted her experience of having had the initial difficulty in sustaining the stakeholder's interest in a subject like sanitation. The Singathon Safaigiri was an event to enhance awareness on sanitation and hygiene by the India Today group using both the print and digital platforms. It was heartening for the audience to know from her that that the initiative had actually led to content development which was interesting enough to mobilize the masses enabling them to have interest in sanitation from multiple perspectives including that of business. However, Kaveree was equally concerned of the challenges that campaigns as Singathon would face in their subsequent phases for these would require innovation to sustain the interest of their sponsors and audiences alike.

According to Kaveree, the media shall be pretty keen to cover the stories of sanitation which are worthy of a publication and that it is a fact that it is not completely obsessed with elections and other political issues. However, she was vocal regarding the necessity for the topic of sanitation to transition from being a one-off benefit show to becoming a social behaviour issue which was interdependent with numerous interesting episodes, each with potential to form a news.

Kaveree also pointed out to the time slots on electronic media being too cost-intensive even for a group like India Today who she thought were well aware of the issues and suggested that it needed to be underwritten by some other people enabling the coverage and reportage on sanitation to create the desired impact.



Interestingly, Kaveree made an issue out of the fact that sanitation was missing from the larger debate on urbanisation and that it was also missing from the usual media beats that would cover urbanisation. This according to her was another major challenge which the media professionals were expected to overcome.

Kaveree hinted at the necessity for the electronic media as an institution to be triggered on the need to include sanitation as part of the entire urbanisation plan. It's of utmost need for the media to first appreciate that safe sanitation behaviour is a way of life for it would be difficult to breathe in polluted air or live in an unclean and unhygienic place for long where open defecation, for instance, is rampant. Besides, the leaders in this civic space also need to be highlighted by the media to create the kind of impact that is needed in terms of awareness creation on sanitation.

The panel chair appreciated Kaveree for having taken the initiative of Singathon Safaigiri Awards towards mainstreaming sanitation issues, enabling media uptake. He was also appreciative of the government initiatives to stress the importance of sanitation as one of the core issues in development in India which had actually made it easier for everyone to talk and write about it better than ever before.

The panel chair highlighted the two other points which according to him bore extra significance-the sanitation economy in India amounting to 62 billion US dollars by 2022 and sanitation becoming a top priority of the current government dispensation. According to the panel chair, these two issues had smoothed the act of the relevant issues in the sector being picked up by the media in an effective and impactful manner.



Ramesh Menon, an author, journalist, documentary filmmaker, and corporate trainer with nearly four decades of varied media experience with the newspapers, television channels, and new media began interestingly by saying that money would generally bring all the partners together including the media. "The award functions as also the events covering issues of topical interest in sanitation have tended to bring in more money than a plain sponsorship" said Ramesh. "It is therefore natural that media is likely to take interest in sanitation which is no longer without adequate money. Secondly, it is equally important to realise that any development campaigns including those on sanitation shall succeed only if it is duly supported by the media partners."

Besides highlighting the importance of media as a valued partner in any developmental initiative, Ramesh defined another important role that media could effectively play to make a difference on the ground. Citing the example of pulse polio programme which according to him was a complete success with media being involved into it, Ramesh outlined that the level of engagement of media in the National Leprosy Eradication Programme (NLEP) was far from being desirable. According to him, the media could do a good job of educating the masses regarding the nuances of elimination and eradication of a disease such as

leprosy from the country's populace. "Leprosy being eliminated does not mean that the disease is eradicated, for elimination only means occurrence of one case in every 10000 population whereas eradication means no occurrence of the disease at all", remarked Ramesh. He went on to add that on October 2nd, 2019 though India would be declared as free from leprosy also, yet there were fears that it might not succeed for there apparently was no support of the media to boost the campaign for elimination during the years of implementation of the programme.

Ramesh also hinted at some interesting instances whereby the supply side stakeholders had taken the initiative to engage with the media in a manner that would boost their campaign to achieve the intended objectives. So, rather than waiting for the media to approach them for stories, an attempt was made by the leaders of the campaign themselves, who reached out to the media, including their editorials, to engage with them and convince them regarding the importance of the initiative including the media's role in it. This was exemplified by the literacy campaign that was undertaken in the Kottiyam district of Kerala where the district collector consistently engaged with the media and the media responded by way of a series of publications across various formats and wrote the programme's success stories.

Arvind Wable, Vice President, WWF-India voiced an important concern that in India, interestingly, every achievement was a double-edged sword; whichever number one might have achieved, there were always going to be more numbers waiting to be achieved. Arvind thought that of the entire sanitation value chain, maybe the 1st landmark had been achieved however the issues covering the remaining components of the value chain were still remaining to be addressed. And then he also added that from a communications point of view, the remaining three posed a way greater challenge than the first on infrastructure creation. Here the role of media according to him was going to be much more significant addressing the issues across use, maintain and treat so as to build a campaign to induce collective behaviour change towards adopting them.

Besides, Arvind was honest enough to admit the stark reality that media in India would want a significantly large chunk of their news as bad news and that there was a general perception among the media practitioners and readers alike that bad news sold better. Arvind expressed his concern and desired that such a perspective of media should ideally change. However, he amused the panel on a realistic note when he said if the media looked for bad news, the sanitation had enough of them as there were gaps in implementation and issues in the sector the redressal of which were long overdue. So even from the perspective of 'bad news', the media was likely to have enough to feed upon to be able to spread what was needed to sensitize those who could then swing into action for addressing most such gaps.

There were three very fundamental points which Arvind thought could be taken up by the media in an attempt to contribute to the programme of sanitation. The foremost among them was mass awareness. "What happens to our shit" and "where it goes" were questions the answers to which were crucial to building community awareness and the media could possibly play an important role in building that awareness which could then pave the way for a successful and community-owned solutions to the problem of waste treatment and disposal. Arvind also emphasized that the role of regional media both print and electronic had a major role to play in this space as their reach was far and wide and given the reality with the local

language and dialect, the messages were better understood and interpreted.

The next issue that the media could effectively seek to emphasize was the demand-side pressure in the absence of which no programmes of social development might ever succeed. The media could possibly play an important role there to help the programme beneficiaries raise their demand seeking an optimal delivery from their supply-side counterparts.

And the third most important role that the media could perhaps play in this space amounted to pushing the urban local bodies for initiatives that most needed to achieve a clean and healthy township and holding them accountable in case they'd not been able to deliver on their promises. Arvind concluded by saying that the role of media in the post ODF era of Swachh Bharat was much more important than their role in phase one of the programme, the phase that was going to witness an open defecation free (ODF) India well within the stipulated timeframe of the programme.

The panel chair reacting to Arvind's point that the media certainly needed a substantial part of their news as bad news, for them to sell well, remarked that although that might be true, yet he thought that it would be prudent for the media to assess as to what sold off well and when and probably then decide as to how their stories could be moulded to be able to reach a wide enough audience ensuring a positive impact.



Amit Arora of Doordarshan Highlighting the Contributions Made by the Public Service Broadcaster in the Sanitation Space in the Country

Ambika Singh of NDTV thought that when it came to spreading awareness in sanitation, it was toilet construction that the media primarily focused on, but she felt that thereafter the media had moved on to cover several other and equally important aspects of sanitation as SBM also evolved. Ambika recounted her own experience of Malegaon which was declared ODF with concerted efforts made by the lady commissioner and people of that district alike. She also highlighted that in the district, the diarrhoea ward for children had witnessed reduced hospitalization of children affected with the disease post declaration of the district as ODF. She thought the media must cover such success stories for the ripple effect to be created for reaching out to the people for securing the benefits of safe sanitation and hygienic behaviour for them.

Among the other things, Ambika made a reference to the Dettol Banega Swachh campaign where their group had extensively covered such facets of sanitation as SLWM and FSSM. She thought that NDTV too had moved from where they had started and were now looking into the issues which were health-based, indicating a transition from Swachh to Swasth Bharat. She emphasised that it was important to educate people as to how health was linked to safe sanitation, to economic benefits, etc. She further said if the media were able to bring in the right kind of perspective, then there was no reason why people would not take it as they received it.

A senior news anchor from Doordarshan, Amit Arora began the discourse by highlighting the contributions made by Doordarshan, the public



service broadcaster and shared that they had broadcasted 350 episodes of a series covering the various components of sanitation under Swachh Bharat and also urged the audience to log on the YouTube to see them for greater awareness on issues such as open defecation, hygiene & cleanliness, FSM, etc. He also made reference to several other programmes that the channel had aired in the recent past on sanitation adopting various narratives of entertainment. Amit, by highlighting these contributions, tried to make a subtle point as to why it was important to build a certain degree of popularity and glamour around sanitation for its wider and increased uptake by the audience. Amit hoped that with increased public private partnership in the sanitation space, the media coverage in the sector would also increase.

The panel chair felt that the online media space was quite different from the traditional space as the former had a much wider outreach than the latter. The chair kind of suggested that those who were willing to contribute in the media space for sanitation should prefer to do so utilizing these spaces more than the traditional ones. Citizen's report or citizen's media was another idea that was floated around for discussion in this context.

Kaveree immediately agreed on the suggestion to use the online media more than the traditional forms of it and cited an example of WhatsApp which in India alone had a reach of above 200 million or more. Interestingly, she questioned that if this medium could be used to spread divisiveness by some, then why can't it be used to spread



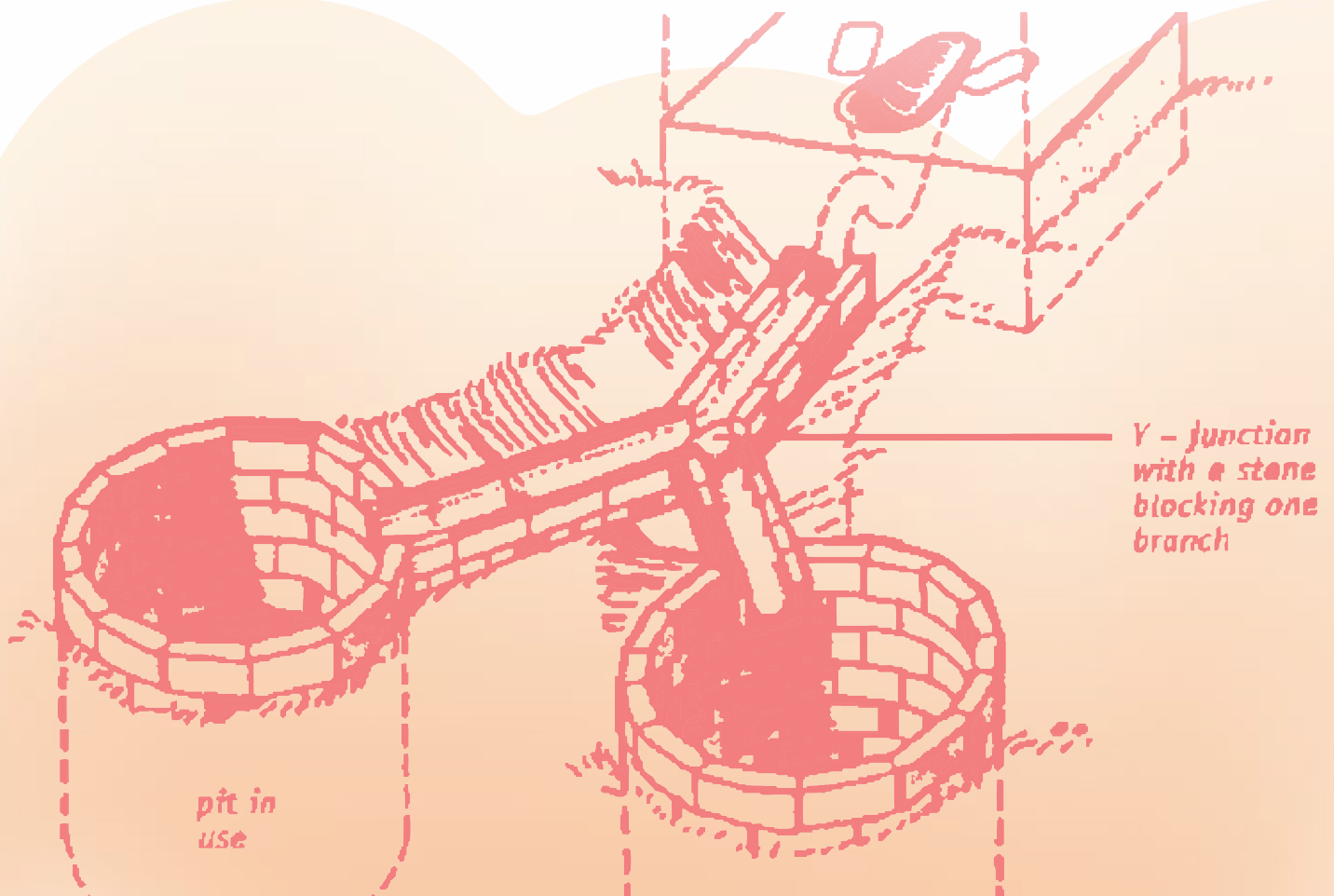
Ambika Singh of NDTV Talking about Dettol Banega Swachh Campaign to Highlight the Importance of SLWM and FSSM

awareness regarding good things including the best practices in sanitation. Reacting to a remark made by the panel chair that the current Prime Minister of India was the biggest TRP seller as rated by one of his colleagues in the media, Kaveree said that there was nothing more political than sanitation also. However, unfortunately, the media had not been able to make sanitation a political issue considering that none of the parliamentarians and legislators, according to her, had the issue of sanitation figuring in their polls agenda and that it had done little to ask these elected representatives as to what they'd had done in terms of sanitation in their respective constituencies in the recent past.

"ISC has a major role to play here in terms of sensitizing these representatives ensuring increased accountability on their part towards including sanitation in their political agendas", said Kaveree. "You cannot be what you cannot see" remarked Kaveree and then sought to create with support from entities like ISC a database that

would have information from all the players, the practitioners, the primary stakeholders and others who were already contributing to the sector or had the potential to do so. She was actually referring to the need of a knowledge portal on sanitation including a platform for disseminating the best practices in the sector to create an impact. "Let's make our politicians accountable and let's make use of our social media handles to spread the messages of safe sanitation and its benefits", Kaveree concluded.

Arvind in his final remarks advocated the increased use of digital media to run the campaign on behaviour change to ensure collective outcomes. "It's important that the campaign is run in a sustained fashion over a longish period of time", he remarked. Arvind also suggested these campaigns to be of interactive in nature facilitating conversations in this space factoring in accountability. ISC, according to him, was in a position to initiate such platforms for participatory interactions for which he also suggested some





Arvind Wable, Vice President, WWF-India Arguing Why Every Achievement Including An ODF India was a "Double-edged Sword"

interesting descriptors like 'Loo Chat' or Loo Café and likened them to Lootel who were coincidentally the 2019 ISC awardee in the category of best social enterprise.

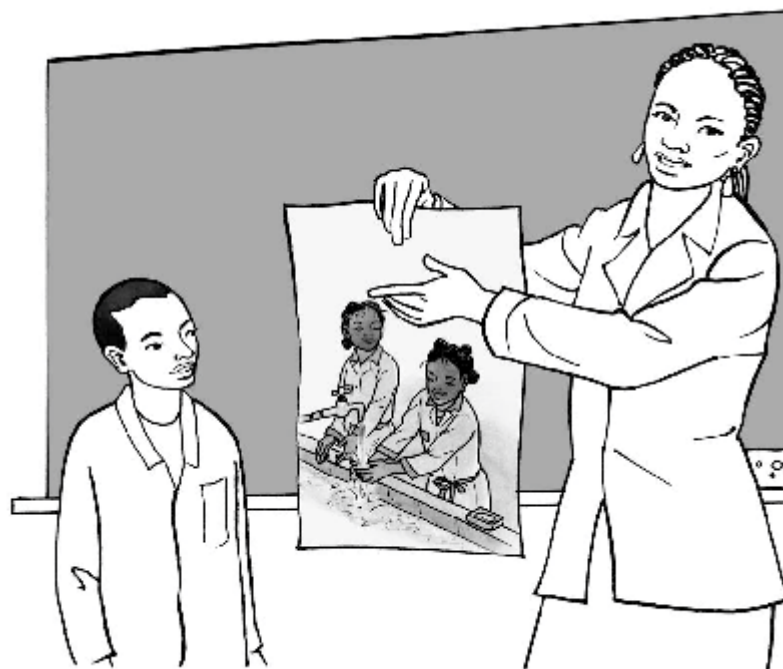
Ramesh also agreed that 'digital' was the way forward and then hastened to add that no one read newspapers beyond 10 o'clock in the morning whereas the digital media contents remained where they were for a much longer period of time for everyone to read, see and interact with.

Amit had a slightly different point of view to offer on the choice of media to spread the message of sanitation and insisted that all forms of media including the over-the-top media such as Netflix, Amazon, etc. be used for information dissemination. He firmly believed that contents were ultimately going to be the 'king' irrespective of the platforms being used to spread them.

To summarise, more and more citizen engagement is needed in the Jan Aandolan or people's movement for making India truly swachh as this would work to create the necessary participation for helping sustain the ODF status by reminding and encouraging 'each one, every time' to use a toilet. More significantly, this will help create demand pressure for the government and implementation bodies to prioritize and keep up the focus on the sanitation initiatives in the path to achieving sustainable sanitation. And media has a very highly significant role to play in this space.

In alignment with the above, ISC have instituted a

knowledge fellowship programme for journalists under the broad umbrella of urban sanitation with focus on safe sanitation for all. In the initial phase of the programme, it has provided an opportunity to some 16 journalists working in the states of Maharashtra and Delhi (National Capital Region) to look, examine and analyse the issues in depth and report about the human, social and economic aspects associated with the issue of urban sanitation. In the subsequent phase of the programme covering various geographies of the country, the programme intends to reach many more journalists who have expressed their keenness to work in the sector.





For Further information:
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