



GOOD HYGIENE: STEPPINGSTONE TO BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY

INDIA SANITATION COALITION
BUILD • USE • MAINTAIN • TREAT

FICCI

Invites you to a webinar on
Good Hygiene: Steppingstone to Business Sustainability

Date: June 22nd, 2020 | Time: 3pm - 4:30pm

 Sanjay Gupta (Moderator) International Development Consultant: Water and Sanitation, Gender, Climate Change, Water Diplomacy	 Aloka Majumdar Senior Vice President & Head of Corporate Sustainability at HSBC India	 Anand Shekhar Project Management Unit, Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin)	 Arvind Wable Founder at Pysa Partners	 Geetika Mehta General Manager Home and Hygiene India, HUL	 Martin Easter General Manager at Hygiene International Ltd	 Neeraj Jain Country Director India at PATH
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Virtual Healthcare & Hygiene Expo 2020

Date: June 22nd - 26th | Time: 12pm - 9pm

Background

India has entered it is “unlock” phase and business and individuals alike have a role to play in contributing to a COVID safe country. The biggest challenge businesses are facing right now is restarting their operations and getting their business back on track. The need of the hour is always to continue practicing good hygiene to prevent the virus from spreading. We at ISC believe that for India to get back to work and continue staying at work hygiene and sanitization will play one of the most key roles. Not only do we need to practice personal hygiene but also ensure good hygiene is maintained in and around us. To highlight the topicality and importance of the issue ISC conducted a webinar on “Good hygiene stepping-stone to business sustainability” in the FICCI Virtual Health and Hygiene Expo., where ISC was a strategic partner.

The event was moderated by Mr Sanjay Gupta, Strategy, and policy advisor consulting with the World Bank and the panel was very diverse and illustrious with senior professionals and executives from different sectors like Banking, FMCG, R&D, Medical Research, advertising, government participated and shared their views on how hygiene and communication around it is, the stepping stone for business sustainability during these tremulous times.

The keynote address was given by Chair, ISC Ms Naina Lal Kidwai, she stressed on the point that, by making sure that we can communicate at every level rural and urban to bring clean sanitary habits while also encouraging people to use toilets, is as essential today as it was at beginning of the SBM and even more. With the pandemic and the ramifications of it, Companies are going to look at their CSR agendas through the lens of SDGs. SDG 6.1 which brings in the wash and hygiene agenda has highlighted the need for water and the challenge in this wash environment and particularly if we are insisting and suggesting that people wash their hands frequently, is linking the availability of water.

Setting the tone for the Discussion

The moderator set the tone of the discussion and talked about the condition of the Indian economy which, due to the pandemic is expected to contract anywhere between one to three percent this year maybe even worse. The government is opening the economy and the dilemma we face is, how do we open and at the same time stay safe? There are two strategies for keeping safe moving forward. One is social distancing which is simple to understand and to put into practice and the second is Hygiene. The subject of hygiene is not only complex, but it is also multi-dimensional.

Let us start with the two problem “P”. The two problems “P” are:

1. Pandemic
2. Panic

During a crisis, many people start panicking and take irrational decisions. Sometimes spend much more effort into things we should be spending less on or do not really focus on the true problem at hand.

The Positive “P” are:

- ❖ People
- ❖ Products
- ❖ Protocols
- ❖ Partners
- ❖ Policies

People are central to any safety mechanism going forward. Then products, the most important products people wanted to get their hands on was sanitizer and soaps. But how do one use the product, what do you do even mean by social distancing, what is allowed what is not allowed, the protocols for the actions to be taken. Who are the partners for the programs that are to be devised? The last is policies, government policies should not only be supportive to people but should also be very inclusive to make sure that everyone is encouraged to participate.

The dialogue attempted to deliberate upon the following key questions:

Can we expect health now to be used as a factor by government and businesses to change the way we look at Sanitation and Hygiene?

What does clean or hygienic means in the context of workplaces and what should someone look out for to ensure cleanliness?

What is the role of mass media in helping industry leaders take the right decision, rather than panicking or ignoring the hygiene aspect within their workspaces be factories or offices?

Despite all the hygiene process and protocol the role of people in an office or factories is most important. How do you go from simple awareness to behaviour change?

What are the things that policies could do to provide a hygienic and clean environment that the public is confident to use the services and products of small and micro entrepreneurs?

It is a common occurrence in India to not come across clean public toilets. Given the Covid-19 pandemic, what policies now should be put in place to make public toilets cleaner and more hygienic?

Should banks have a system to judge financial viability of businesses based on their practices of hygiene and sanitation practice in times of Covid-19?

What is the government doing to help MSME's practice hygiene, sanitation and provide confidence to all the customers and thereby helping those small businesses?



Key Takeaways from the discussion

It is an opportunity to bring behaviour change in the broad masses of people because this is not just going to have an impact on COVID, this is going to have an impact across diseases for better health. From an organization's perspective, they do not have an option but to work around this newfound interest in health from the population. It will also start impacting talent management, recruitment, and retention. Everybody is going to look at organizations which are at the forefront of these issues, organizations which are working around it, building their environments around solutions.

Cleaning means different things to different people. It can mean anything from wiping yourself down to disinfection, to sanitization to sterilization. In different industries there are different measures of cleaning processes and implementation for e.g. the food industry has done it extremely well many years and it is written into global food safety standards similarly, with the pharmaceutical industry.

The media will have to play a very critical role and the first role that they must play is consistent messaging because COVID is not going away anytime soon. This is something which is going to stay with us and therefore the importance of consistent coverage and consistent messaging will be a very critical component.

Any strategy of any kind is only as good as the people who implement it, so people become the core for successful implementation of any strategy. What we are asking organizations to do and people to do is a change of culture. Hygiene needs to be an intrinsic part of an organizational culture and it is a tough task because this culture is made of habits formed over a period. The first thing in a culture change or habit change, is clarifying the meaning, so it's not as important in culture to see what you're doing, the more important thing is why you're doing it.

Government of India has come out with the health and safety protocol that businesses of all sizes must use at the local level. It's a very exhaustive, yet very simple list of steps that the government has suggested for businesses to adhere to while delivering services, it's available publicly on government website and it's a must read for everyone who wants to do business in the WASH sector.

Somewhere there is a lack of understanding between policy implementation and monitoring. The policy unfortunately in many cases is made without a greater understanding of ground realities. There are constraints in our country about ground realities, so we need to find innovative solutions when there are issues. We need a policy which takes ground realities into consideration. Rigorous training of both people who maintain hygiene in toilets public toilets, including people who use it. There is need for senior people in administration to get involved if this must succeed, it cannot be a hands-off process which is passed down the line in a bureaucratic way.

Banks and financial institutions are all in the business of risk and this will now definitely emerge as a risk that one will need to look at in further lending decisions.

Government of India has given a protocol to gram panchayats saying, this is what must be in place and must be met. If you are a careless supplier, if you do not adhere to basic health and safety protocol, you are not allowed to do business. Government is empowering the local rural government which will employ and hire services from these businesses. GOI has also come out with a hygiene promotion program where role of different actors has been clarified and private sector can go inform, educate, communicate, and sell the products. Most of the panchayat and villages have a dedicated cadre which has been trained by Swachh Bharat officials on how to communicate, what to propagate and how to monitor whether sanitation and hygiene practices are happening as per protocol.

A common question was asked to all the speakers, if you are the leader of an industry association or a policymaker within the government, what is the one thing that you would do to promote hygiene for a robust economic recovery?

As an industry person, think about the segments that you are in a better capacity to aid. If it is health, infrastructure, migrant workers, health care worker, sanitation workers, police personnel and then work towards supporting them. The opportunities are immense collaboration and innovation is key in a time of a crisis when you have limited resources. People should their core competency and then see how you can add value.

As a policymaker, what we really need is very clearly defined hygiene standards. Move it towards the movement which is around right to hygiene and health in public spaces. Where every individual has a right to have a safe hygienic environment in every public space and as a policymaker one should start with government buildings facilities, public health centres, and district hospitals. As a policymaker, there

needs to be very clearly defined public toilet policy and guidelines issued by the government after studying the ground realities in every state and every situation and those policies should then be adhered to and a white paper on public toilets should be issued and then monitoring of that should be done on a regular basis.

As an industrialist, we need to see that COVID has shown us the need of why we need to change and as we go forward, increase that visibility of why and the benefits of improvement. As a policymaker if there is funding available there should be a dedicated funding towards constant messaging for behaviour change. For example, if the CSR spending is 2%, of that 2% could be a small amount of percentage that can be just dedicated for using for a purpose like this.

Closing Remarks

The panellists brought up the topic about behaviour change and best practices and how important that is going to be in COVID and Post- COVID times. With the same thought India sanitation coalition launched a campaign ‘Share the toilet: Not the disease’ which is focused on getting India back to work.

The condition of common toilets, the condition of public toilet, that's something that worries everyone, and our campaign focuses on the correct usage of toilets, the dos and don'ts, what needs to be done by the institution, what needs to be done by the individual using the toilets, what are the protocols to be followed by the housekeeping and facility management teams.

And moving forward, we need to be very careful about how we communicate, we need be willing to accept that we don't know everything that this is a new disease, we don't know whether it came from the markets of Wuhan or it came from a laboratory and a lot of conspiracy theories are there. Let us be transparent, let us talk about what we know and evolve as we go along.