



Fecal Sludge and Septage Management: Ushering A New Era in Sanitation Value Chain Management in Rajasthan

-Insights Series-



India Sanitation Coalition, IRC and TARU Leading Edge
invite you for Insights' second dialogue on

FSSM Matters: Looking Forward

'Insights', a co-designed Knowledge Series. The objective of this dialogue is to understand the significance of faecal sludge and septage management in the sanitation value chain. With increasing advocacy around the issue, this session will be to inform and deliberate amongst policy makers, researchers and social and market practitioners and work towards a collaborative framework.



Insights - A WASH Dialogue and Partnership Forum, started the New Year with a multi-stakeholder dialogue on 'FSSM Matters: Looking Forward', in Jaipur on 10th January 2017.

The discussion revolved on **whether it is time to consider Fecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM) as an effective and long-term solution in the sanitation value chain.**

The [India Sanitation Coalition](#) (ISC) was formed with the objective of bringing all stakeholders in the sanitation field onto one platform where they can share information, learn from others, partner and collaborate. Today, the ISC has NGOs, donors, corporates, foundations, trusts and government as partners, working together to create a larger impact, rather than each one working in their vertical.

ISC follows the approach of **Build, Use, Maintain and Treat**. As partners come together to support the country's Swachh Bharat (Clean India) Mission, it's important for all to understand what the essential good practices for each of the four phases are. These need to be part of the project design for all sanitation related interventions.

I. Participants

The forum brought together representatives of Directorate of Local Self Government (LSG) and Rajasthan Urban Infrastructure Development Project (RUIDP) and several experts from the development sector including World Bank, WaterAid, Population Services International (PSI), CEPT, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), Centre of Policy Research (CPR), Consortium for DEWATS Dissemination (CDD) Society, Population Services International (PSI), SCEPT, IPE Global, WASH Institute, Cairn India, NFSSM Alliance.



II. Introduction Presentation by Mr K K Sharma, Chief Engineer, Local Self Government (LSG) from Government of Rajasthan

The discussion was initiated with a presentation on ‘Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban Rajasthan’ In his presentation Mr. K.K. Sharma shared recent details of the process of Swachh Bharat Mission and SWM in Rajasthan. Until this point, 94183 toilets were constructed under SBM in Rajasthan. 600 Tons per day of SWM are treated in Jaipur. Ten municipalities plan to install treatment plants by 2018 and waste to energy projects are running in the cities of Jodhpur, Jaipur and Kota. From the government side, guidelines for Swachh Bharat and Swachh Surveskan were issues as well as technical sessions held. However, challenges still persist with motivation of beneficiaries to construct toilets, releases of funds, implementing guidelines and manuals properly and holding IEC activities across all ULBs. In the month of January 2017, Swachh Survekshan is being conducted in 29 AMRUT¹ towns.

On FSSM, Mr. K.K. Sharma stated that a lot of steps are being taken. A National Workshop was organized by MoUD in Oct 2016 for SBM Urban as well as FSSM guidelines are being circulates to ULBs in Rajasthan. A Rapid Assessment Tool for FSSM has been provided as well. Key components for a Septage Management Plan are collection, transportation, treatment and reuse/safe disposal. Each step in itself bears challenges that need to be considers like cost calculation, monitoring and the right calculation for tanks. [State Sewerage and Waste Water Policy 2016](#) that has been issues by LSG. This in light of a lack of a systematic emptying system of septic tank (private enterprises exist but they are not organised) as well as a septage treatment plant. He concluded that there was an **urgent need to develop FSTP operating models** and monitoring protocols in the context of Rajasthan.

III. Panel discussion summary

A panel discussion followed on the relevance of FSSM in the present scenario and the subsequent need for a collaborative framework, wherein members shared their thoughts, key learnings and challenges from their respective sanitation projects and the opportunities of cross learning.

During the plenary, issues like lack of system for monitoring the construction of septic tanks, hassles in periodic desludging and poor waste water management were raised. It was suggested that for sustainability, FSSM should be looked as part of the larger urban planning and the concept should be integrated with infrastructure development. Besides, setting demand among stakeholders will help create a more responsive government in the area of FSSM.

The Ministry of Urban Development (GoI) has included FSM as key component under ‘[AMRUT](#)’. The AMRUT programme is benefitting only the larger cities, while the smaller ones are being left out. It is crucial that the governments’ looks beyond containment, which is the current focus under Swatch Bharat Mission, there needs to be given equal importance given to understanding, creating systems and regulating where the fecal sludge goes from the pits/tanks.

¹ AMRUT stands for Atal Mission For Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation



Speakers highlighted that FSSM has gained importance since a smaller percentage of households in urban areas are connected to a sewerage network systems, most households have on-site sanitation systems (like septic tanks and large holes). These onsite sanitation systems are presently out of the purview of sewage system and in absence of an institutionalized emptying system, waste water management is a grave concern and dealing with open defecation becomes a far more challenging affair.

IV. Voices of participants

Mr Depinder Kapur from the [National Institute of Urban Affairs](#) (NIUA) said that FSM should be a part of every city sanitation plan. Challenges have prevailed at every level therefore each organisation had a key role to play. He viewed that while state specific strategies are guided by their funding and policy in place, hence engagement with government is the most critical part for FSM.

Ms Anju Dwivedi from [Centre for Policy Research](#) (CPR) shared the two important successes under the partnership project with the Government of Odisha achieved after a yearlong discussion and orientation for policy changes. These were formulation of a comprehensive '[Urban Sanitation Strategy](#)' and the 'Waste Water Disposal and Management Law'.

Ms Meera Mehta from [CEPT](#) said that apart Government of Maharashtra's efforts in sanitation in urban areas. For sustainability of open defecation free cities, the Government has initiated ODF+ which involves proper emptying and treatment system and passing on financial incentives to cities. Further, involvement of private sector in FSM services is being explored in few cities. Meera emphasised that FSM should be made a regular service like water service and brought under scheduled services as in countries like Philippines. Service level benchmarking (SLB) for monitoring and measuring a service provider should be made a norm in FSM. She highlighted that every state should have a sanitation policy in place, identify areas for capacity building and give importance to data indicators.

Mr Manas Rath shared the successful technology based STP model being set up by [Consortium for DEWATS Dissemination \(CDD\) Society](#) in smaller cities. He suggested that while it is important to choose a modular technology, which is flexible to adopt for an efficient FSM, it is important to focus on other key components like - operation and planning, choosing a closer location to cut on the transportation costs, capital financing and costs for operation and maintenance. Besides making people aware about importance of sanitation and need for treatment plants, it was critical to create an efficient and smell-free treatment system for greater acceptance. He said that FSTP should be approached as a long-term, holistic and end-to-end solution as cities are bound to increase in future and because the cost of FSTP is miniscule compared to the sewerage system. Public financing for STP in smaller towns, which are not included in AMRUT is an issue. However, in the 14th Finance Commission, ULBs have provision of funds. Public-Private Partnership needed to be explored for funding sources. He emphasised packaging a product, which is technology-savvy and marketable, involvement of local stakeholders like real estate, greater public participation, levying of user



charges or sanitation charge as critical aspects. Aim should be to develop an inclusive business model which involves those engaged in manual scavenging and focuses on capacity building needs of masons for rural areas and classroom training and exposure visits at every level including members of ULBs.

Mr Arumugam Kalimuthu from [WASH Institute](#), stressed on the need for developing a complete value chain and focus on enforcement, service availability and greater budgeting for FSM by ULBs. He informed that policy guidelines for FSM have been submitted to Government of India.

Ms Aparajita Gogoi, working with [PSI](#), shared the efforts made in Bihar for government buy-in and dialogue to make it realise that FSM is an alternate system to sewage for peri-urban and urban areas. She further highlighted that implementing FSM requires a strong collaborative framework within organisations.

Mr K K Sharma concluded on the note that learning from CDD will be proposed to the Government of Rajasthan for setting up STPs in cities with less than one lakh population.

