

# FOR ALL AND FOREVER

IMPROVING SUSTAINABILITY, EQUITY & MONITORING IN  
SANITATION & HYGIENE SYSTEMS AND SERVICE PROVISION

2012



*Photo by Chessell, S., HYSAWA*



With the support of



## Key messages from South Asia hygiene practitioners' workshop, February 2012

The third bi-annual Asia Sanitation and Hygiene Practitioners' workshop was held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 31 January to 2 February 2012. As with the previous events in 2008 and 2010, some fifty Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practitioners and researchers came together to share their diverse experience. Here, we identify key topics and highlight recommendations.

Once again co-organised by BRAC, WaterAid, IRC, and WSSCC, the event provided a platform for pan-Asian experience: twenty-seven papers from six countries provided a rich collection of field evidence. These illustrated progress that has been made in improving knowledge and implementation of equitable and sustainable sanitation services, and in improving monitoring, whilst also pointing towards the challenges that remain. At the heart of the discussion was an acknowledgment of the complexity of sanitation and hygiene. It was agreed that toilets should be seen as elements in a system. In many places progress is made in numbers of toilets built but for a range of reasons these fail to deliver ongoing services that provide equity and sustainability. A service delivery approach needs to be developed.

### For all: reaching the poor and marginalised

While coverage is increasing, it is often the poorest and most vulnerable who are not serviced; WASH programmes tend not to include or extend to the poorest urban slums, areas where ethnic minority populations dominate or which are remote or inaccessible—for example due to being a mountainous region or because of a high rainfall in the area.

Gender remains a fundamental aspect of equity. Men and women have different needs and interests related to water sanitation and hygiene. However, all have a role to play. Participants noted positive developments since 2008—the workshop has inspired people to break taboos and address menstrual hygiene management in their programmes.

#### **Strategic messages:**

- Improve pro-poor targeting, promotion, and communication within programmes.
- Provide equitable financing to ensure village-based funding and targeted loan schemes.
- Provide transparent award systems for achievement of open defecation free (ODF) areas.
- Produce clear and credible data to ensure that programmes effectively identify, and then target marginalised groups.
- Continue to drive forward awareness about menstruation and menstrual hygiene management.





Photo by Rahman, S., WaterAid Bangladesh

**Practical recommendations:**

- Design innovations to reduce the costs of all sanitation and hygiene products, and to increase the durability of toilets, including those for high water table areas.
- Ensure privacy and safety of shared/public toilets.
- Ensure inclusive design, taking into account the special needs of menstruating women.
- Target girls who are not at school in menstrual hygiene management programmes.
- Engage men and also recognise men's hygiene requirements.

See papers 6, 9, 15, 16, 17 and 23.

**Finance recommendations:**

- Target financial and labour support according to a household's ability to participate.
- Use ODF prize money to help the poorest buy construction materials for toilets.
- Create payment transfer systems that treat villages as the unit for fund transfers rather than individual households.
- Tariffs should reflect ability to pay – for example through lower tariffs for women and children, and for poorer families who depend on public facilities.
- Replicate successful business and finance models for public toilets and seek strengthened linkages with the private sector.

## Forever: a toilet is only the first step

Sustainability is taken to refer both to continuous, satisfactory functioning of sanitation hardware and to its continuous effective use (the service element); it also encompasses ongoing hygienic behaviours. So, to ensure that the benefits of sanitation and hygiene are enjoyed by all, forever, it is vital to look beyond construction and capital investments in toilets, pipes and taps to the disposal or reuse of faecal sludge.

Currently millions of tons of untreated human excreta end up in the environment.

Addressing sanitation without focusing on disposal is merely promoting “postponed open defecation”. This includes the rarely acknowledged issue that wastewater and faecal sludge are used with minimal (or no) treatment, to fertilise crops that are sold in cities. Ecological sanitation, or ‘ecosan’ operates on the principle that human waste is a resource. Safe reuse increases all aspects of the sustainability of sanitation; social/cultural acceptability, appropriate design and ensuring affordability are crucial to its uptake.

### **Recommendations:**

- Safe disposal of faecal sludge requires urgent attention.
- In order to be sustainable, all elements of the sanitation service have to be economically and financially viable, socially and culturally acceptable, technically and institutionally appropriate, and must protect the environment and natural resources.
- Sustained investments are needed in hygiene promotion, in facilities management and capital maintenance, in monitoring and human capacity.
- The unsafe, degrading and marginalising practise of manual sweeping must be obliterated.
- For ecosan to work at scale there is a need for closer engagement with farmers and decision makers.
- Further research is needed on safety of productive use of wastewater and faecal sludge, institutional arrangements and business models for private sector involvement in faecal sludge management and productive use.

*See papers 1, 13, 19 and 27.*





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## Move beyond counting toilets

Lack of reliable information limits evidence-based decision making and effective learning for improved WASH interventions. Participants in the 2010 workshop concluded that monitoring hygiene practices is difficult at scale and is undermined by unreliability of personal responses; bypassing these shortcomings by measuring health impacts of projects has major drawbacks<sup>1</sup>. However, two years on, participants' experience is more positive, revealing that monitoring at scale can provide credible information, be repeated regularly at scale, combine quantitative and qualitative information, and can use multiple sources for information.

Clearly, counting the number of toilets constructed is only one indicator of progress towards the goal of eradicating open defecation. Parameters addressed in monitoring include standard measures such as availability of soap and water for hand washing, and locally specific ones, such as a focus on repairs of superstructure after rainy season.

### **Recommendations:**

- The adoption of a service and system orientated approach creates a parallel need to develop suitable indicators.
- Monitoring programmes need to be designed with care, and implemented appropriate to local circumstances.
- Parameters to be measured need to include pit emptying and reuse and/or safe final disposal of sludge.
- Parameters should include locally specific ones.
- Monitoring programmes should engage community members and ensure they reflect the range of problems encountered by the poor.

*See papers 11, 12, 18 and 21.*

<sup>1</sup>IRC. 2010. *Effective hygiene behaviour change programming: messages from the South Asia Hygiene Practitioners Workshop, February 2010.* [online] IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre. Available at: <http://www.irc.nl/page/55493>.

## Papers

Here is the list of papers produced for the workshop. A complete reference list is available at: <http://www.irc.nl/page/68058>

1. Abdullah Al Mamun, S.A. & Monirul Alam, B. 2012. Eco-toilets: an ecological sanitation option for difficult areas.
2. Alrai, I.S. & Imran Yusuf Shami, B. 2012. Upscaling rural sanitation in Pakistan post-2010 flood areas.
3. Bekele, A. 2012. Reaching poor and vulnerable communities in rural Afghanistan through CLTS.
4. Chessell, S. 2012. Case study of public toilets in Roghunathpur Union Parishad (photo essay) .
5. Chetry, P.B. 2012. ODF Campaign Photo story from Pyuthan District- Nepal (photo story).
6. Ediriweera, I.V.W. 2012. Efforts to reach sanitation and hygiene for vulnerable groups in Sri Lanka.
7. Goudel, C. & Tuukkanen, M. 2012. Hygiene and sanitation behaviour change efforts in vulnerable communities.
8. Hussain, I. & Tariq, M. 2012. Learning for healthy living – scaling up school based hygiene education in 2010 flood affected Pakistan.
9. Islam, M.K. & Opel A. 2012. Challenges acknowledged but ignorance continued: WASH deprivation of excluded community intensified.
10. Kabir, B., Barua, M.K., & Ahmed, M. 2012. Improving menstrual hygiene facilitates in secondary schools: initiatives from BRAC-WASH Program.
11. Karim, F. et al. 2012. The BRAC WASH Programme: Describing the core operational approaches, monitoring, evaluation and some results.
12. Kapur, D. & Kumar, P. 2012. Formative research on sanitation and hygiene behaviours: current status, knowledge, attitudes, barriers and enablers: primary research findings.
13. Kausar, R. 2012. Sustaining behaviour change through participatory approaches in the project cycle.
14. Khatri, N.R. & Pokhrel, S. 2012. Children with camera: knowledge sharing for changing sanitation of society (photo story).
15. Khisro, S.S.N. & Rahman, A.U. 2012. Paving the way for menstrual hygiene management in rural Pakistan.
16. Manish, B. & Shreya, B. 2012. Study of different modalities of public toilets in Kathmandu metropolitan city.
17. Mudgerikar, A. & Cronin, A. 2012. Review of the status of equity in WASH programming in India.
18. Nefawan, I. 2012. Participatory establishment of water and sanitation facilities management unit at village level.
19. Opel, A., Bashar, M.K., Ahmed, M.F. 2012. Faecal sludge management in Bangladesh: an issue that needs urgent attention.
20. Poudel, B., Adhikari, K., & Bastola, R. 2012. Decentralization for sanitation coverage.
21. Sharma, J., Tiwari, B.K.K., Dwivedi, C.A. 2012. Improvement in community toilet complex services through community monitoring.
22. Shrestha, R. 2012. '6B Approach' for toilet promotion: cost reductions.
23. Snehalatha, M. Venkataswamy V. Ratna Reddy, D. Sirisha, V. Anitha, Busenna, P. 2012. Looking beyond capital costs -life cycle costing for sustainable service delivery- a study from Andhra Pradesh, India.
24. Sumanasekera, D.U. & Abeykone, A. M. 2012. Inclusion of less privileged communities as sanitation beneficiaries in the demand-responsive approach.
25. Thapa, G.B. 2012. Aligning action for sanitation: Ground for achievement in Dang district- Nepal (photo story).
26. Verhagen, J. & Kvarnström, E. 2012. Honey suckers: reuse of faecal sludge in Bangalore, India (draft paper).
27. Wickramasinghe, D. 2012. Managing menstrual hygiene in emergency situations: How far from reality?



Photo by Rahman, Md. Ashadur,  
HYSAWA



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Water Aid Bangladesh

## Resources

### **2012 workshop materials:**

<http://www.irc.nl/page/68058>

### **Materials from previous regional practitioners' workshops:**

<http://www.irc.nl/page/39978>

### **Faecal sludge management:**

<http://www.sandec.ch>

### **School water sanitation and hygiene:**

<http://www.schools.watsan.net>

### **Menstrual hygiene:**

<http://www.washdoc.info/page/66308> and

<http://www.wsscc.org/topics/hygiene/menstrual-hygiene-management>

## About regional practitioners' workshops

This is the third in a series of Asian practitioners' workshops organised collaboratively by IRC, BRAC, WaterAid and WSSCC. In 2008, the workshop focused on factors needed to move beyond construction consistent use by all and maintenance. The workshop in 2010 highlighted the importance of targeted, sustained and flexible hygiene promotion that is effective at turning 'knowers' into 'doers' and that focuses on enabling factors for behaviour change.



## IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre

IRC International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC) facilitates the sharing, promotion and use of knowledge so that governments, professionals and organisations can better support poor men, women and children in developing countries to obtain water and sanitation services they will use and maintain.



BRAC is a Bangladesh-based international NGO working to empower people and communities in situations of poverty, illiteracy, disease, and social injustice. BRAC currently runs a large-scale WASH programme in many rural areas of Bangladesh.



WaterAid transforms lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world's poorest communities. The organisation works in twenty-seven countries in Africa, Asia, and the Pacific region. At the global level, WaterAid works with partners to influence decision-makers and maximise impact.



## The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council

The Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (WSSCC) is an international membership organisation that works to achieve sustainable water supply and sanitation for all people, through enhancing collaboration among sector agencies and professionals.