

MAKE A
SPLASH!

LIXIL
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unicef

UNICEF-LIXIL INNOVATIVE COLLABORATION ON SANITATION & HYGIENE

Stories of Change from India



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UNICEF INDIA @2024

UNICEF works to promote and protect the rights of children across India.

The UNICEF and LIXIL 'Make a Splash!' (MaS!) partnership envisions to strengthen the progress towards the Sustainable Development Goal 6 – to ensure access to adequate and equitable water, sanitation, and hygiene for all and end open defecation by 2030.

The collaboration contributes towards promoting safe sanitation and hygiene in communities, while building competitive sanitation markets, through programmes that help children and families stop open defecation and access affordable and sustainable solutions for safely managed sanitation. In 2022–2024, the MaS! partnership in India was implemented in two focus States, namely Bihar and Odisha.

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Gruhita Benya with her SATO pan in Koraput district, Odisha



Joining Hands for Sanitation and Hygiene

A Look at the MaS!
Programme's
Coordination Mechanism
in India through a
Collaborative Approach

UNICEF-LIXIL collaboration workshop
held at UNICEF Office, New Delhi

Access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) remains a critical challenge in India, especially for vulnerable populations. Recognizing this need, LIXIL and UNICEF India joined forces to create and roll out the 'Make a Splash! (MaS!)' programme. This article delves into the MaS! programme's coordination mechanism, showcasing it as the best practice for successful WASH interventions.

MaS! Phase 2: A Call for Collaboration

During Phase 2 of the MaS! partnership in India, a crucial need emerged – establishing a robust coordination mechanism between LIXIL and UNICEF in India at both the central and state levels. To address this, a UNICEF-

LIXIL coordination meeting was held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India, on 26 July 2023. The meeting was attended in person by the LIXIL India, UNICEF Bihar, UNICEF Odisha teams and a representative from UNICEF India Country Office, and in virtual mode by the LIXIL UK team and also a representative from UNICEF India Country Office.

This workshop aimed to:

- **Solidify the Partnership:** Explore areas for collaboration in sanitation and hygiene, strengthening the bond between LIXIL and UNICEF.
- **Strategic Roadmap Development:** Gain insights into LIXIL's product range presence in focus States (Bihar and Odisha) and marketing strategies, and develop a roadmap for interventions.



- **Geographical Focus:** Agree on target areas within the two States for concentrated intervention.

This collaborative approach led to the co-creation of an action plan for joint implementation, highlighting roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders.

Monthly Online Meetings: Fostering Progress

To ensure progress against the joint action plan and address challenges, LIXIL and UNICEF convened regular online meetings that were held in the months of August, September, October and November 2023. These meetings served to:

Monitoring framework for roll out of agreed UNICEF-LIXIL ACTION Plan - August 2023															
State: Bihar															
Sl. No.	No. in Action	District	Block	Activities (Meeting of Workshop/CEI/ JICA)	Month	Specific Area Covered (District/Block/CD Block)	Target group	Expected Members (in thousands)	Expected Outcomes	UNICEF/Partners' Role	LIXIL's Role	Designator: Responsible Person			
												J	K	L	M
1	1	NA	NA	Multi stakeholder consultation on JICA AT	Aug-23	State	Key Lixil Distributors of GoB	50	Draft action plan for the Region promotion.	Organizer and Adversary with the Lixil Department of GoB	Creating Market Place, Product Display and to Strategic with the GoB officials.	1. (Probable) Sinks - name of the person who will look after the existing capacity. 2. Sinks & Ponds - List	IME Workshop on 27th Sept 2023 to draft the plan.	FCIM Workshop with shared with the Department. GoB to suggest a date to be conducted in October 2023.	
2	4	NA	NA	Meeting through DICED for promotion of electric rooftop SMEs and HMA at the community level.	Aug-Oct 2023	State	IRE Beneficiaries	500000	Awareness Generation, Subsidized Promotion and Marketing	Facilities and Coordination	Communication material and specific content based on mutually agreed campaign. Content develop - review and plan-revision of the content.		Meeting being conducted. Govt room to create up at the State level. Values received from Lixil are being used to the project.		
3	11	Araria	Patil and Jakhin	Linking of the IRs with water recycling technology.	Aug-Oct 2023	Block	IRE Beneficiaries	5000	Understanding the recycling requirement and challenges.	Facilitation and Coordination	Telephone follow up with the potential customer for sales promotion.				
4	12	Patna	Patil and Srinagar	Linking of the IRs with water recycling technology.	Aug-Oct 2023	Block	IRE Beneficiaries	5000	Understanding the recycling requirement and challenges.	Facilitation and Coordination	Enter supply and sales by the vendor.				
5	17	Araria	NA	District Level Official Observations	Aug-23	District	District Level Officials	50	Technical Awareness Generation	Facilities and Coordination	Providing communication material and product range.				
6	18	Araria	Patil and Jakhin	Block Official Observations	Aug-23	Block	Block Officials	100	Technical Awareness Generation	Facilities and Coordination	Providing communication material and product range.				
7	20	Patna	NA	District Level Official Observations	Aug-23	District	District Level Officials	50	Technical Awareness Generation	Facilities and Coordination	Providing communication material and product range.				
8	21	Patna	Patil and Srinagar	Block Official Observations	Aug-23	Block	Block Officials	100	Technical Awareness Generation	Facilities and Coordination	Providing communication material and product range.				

Monitoring framework for UNICEF-LIXIL joint interventions

- **Monitor and Adapt:** Assess progress based on the joint action plan and collaboratively address any roadblocks.
- **Synergy for Success:** Leverage the combined strengths and expertise of both teams to achieve optimal results.
- **Partnership Optimization:** Utilize the unique capabilities of LIXIL and UNICEF for a more impactful programme.



Above: Development of joint action plan during a coordination meeting in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, by the UNICEF-LIXIL team; Left: UNICEF India and LIXIL India team members during the one-day collaboration workshop at UNICEF Office, New Delhi



These meetings involved national and State focal points from both LIXIL and UNICEF, along with partner participation.

F2F Review Meeting

A second face-to-face (F2F) meeting of the LIXIL and UNICEF teams was held in New Delhi on 12 March 2024. This meeting was organized to review the progress of 2023 and the upcoming plans for 2024. The meeting envisioned strengthening the UNICEF-LIXIL partnership through joint plans of action, areas of intervention, communication and strategies.

Communication and Visibility: A United Front

The joint coordination workshop also fostered close collaboration on communication and programme visibility. At the national level, communication teams from LIXIL and UNICEF joined forces to highlight the MaS! partnership on social media platforms. This collaboration ensured that the key events and interventions in the focus States received proper coverage.



Discussion in progress on the joint action plan at the coordination meeting in Bhubaneswar, Odisha



UNICEF-LIXIL collaboration workshop held at UNICEF Office, New Delhi

The Power of Collaboration: A Model for WASH

The MaS! programme's coordination mechanism offers valuable takeaways for the WASH sector in India and beyond. By fostering collaboration and communication, the programme has paved the way for a more efficient and impactful approach to WASH implementation. The emphasis on joint planning, monitoring and communication showcases the power of a united front in achieving WASH goals. As India strives for universal WASH access, the MaS! programme serves as a scalable model that can be replicated and adapted to other contexts.

Looking Ahead: Building on Success

The MaS! programme's success story highlights the importance of a well-defined coordination mechanism for WASH interventions. While challenges like



Mobilizing the community members on safely managed sanitation and hygiene practices in Sambalpur, Odisha

trust-building and navigating diverse stakeholder interests exist, the programme demonstrates that these can be overcome through a commitment to effective communication and shared goals. The MaS! programme stands as a testament to the transformative power of collaboration in tackling the critical challenge of ensuring WASH access for all. The coordination system is proposed to be continued in the MaS! Phase 3 partnerships.



MaS! in India: Fostering Innovations

Driving Sanitation
Innovation through
Collaboration

Mr. Daigo Ishiyama, Leader, Innovation, SATO, buys a colourful table cloth made from waste by Muskan (one of the SHG members) in Muzaffarpur, Bihar

Overcoming Challenges, Charting a Course: Exploring Innovations in the MaS! Programme

Ensuring access to safely managed sanitation (SMS) remains a significant hurdle in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6) in India. To address this challenge, LIXIL and UNICEF India joined forces to create the 'Make a Splash!' programme (MaS!). This unique initiative not only prioritizes collaboration but also actively seeks innovative solutions to bridge sanitation gaps. This article explores the MaS! programme's dedication to innovation, highlighting its efforts to identify and implement new sanitation technologies and approaches.

Understanding the Landscape: A Joint Field Visit

Recognizing the need for ground-level insights, a team from LIXIL and UNICEF, along with representatives from the SATO Global Innovation Team, embarked on a joint field visit to Bihar and Odisha, two focus States for the MaS! Programme in India. The SATO global innovation team consisted of Mr. Daigo Ishiyama, Mr. Gunjan Patel and Mr. Saurabh Pandya; while the UNICEF team consisted of Mr. Prabhakar Sinha, Ms. Shipra Saxena, Ms. Madhumita Sen Sarkar and Ms. Barnali Ghosh.

This visit, conducted from 29 May to 3 June 2023, aimed to:

- **Identify Gaps:** Gain a firsthand understanding of the challenges hindering the achievement of Safely Managed Sanitation (SMS) in rural areas.



Mr. Daigo Ishiyama, Leader, Innovation, SATO, demonstrating SATO products at a retailers meet during his visit in Muzaffarpur, Bihar



LIXIL team takes a look at the register maintained by self-help groups (SHGs) for WASH credit at Angarbandha Gram Panchayat, Angul district, Odisha

- **Innovation Assessment:** Evaluate the effectiveness of existing sanitation solutions and identify opportunities for new, innovative products.

The team visited households, schools and preschools, engaged with the local communities and observed how current sanitation products were functioning. This onsite assessment allowed for a deeper understanding of the specific needs arising from diverse geographical terrains.

Workshops: Fostering Collaboration and Idea Exchange

To further explore innovative solutions, workshops were organized in both Bihar and Odisha. These workshops brought together masons, plumbers, NGO partners, service providers and key stakeholders. The SATO team actively participated, showcasing various toilet pan and V-trap designs while explaining their functionalities and potential benefits. These sessions fostered a collaborative environment, encouraging discussions on the challenges faced during toilet construction and exploring potential solutions.

Challenges Unveiled: A Call for Innovation

The field visit and workshops highlighted several critical challenges that require innovative solutions for achieving safely managed sanitation (SMS):

- **Flood Resilience:** Seasonal flooding poses a significant threat to sanitation infrastructure,

often damaging toilets and causing communities to revert to open defecation. Innovative solutions are needed to ensure toilets withstand floods.

- **Single-Pit Reliance:** Space constraints often lead to single-pit toilet construction. When these pits fill up, the risk of open defecation rises. New technologies for pit extensions or alternative sanitation systems are crucial.
- **Desludging Challenges:** The lack of readily available desludging services, particularly in areas with narrow lanes and inaccessible roads, hinders proper sanitation management. Innovative, low-cost desludging equipment or processes are needed to address this gap.
- **Toilet Door Durability:** Corrosion significantly damages toilet doors made from aluminum or iron in rural households. This necessitates the development of more durable and sustainable door materials.





SATO team visit in Odisha was positively covered by the local print media

- **Mason Resistance:** A reluctance among masons to retrofit existing toilet pits creates a barrier to improving sanitation facilities.



Stakeholders developing the joint action plan during the UNICEF-LIXIL coordination meeting held in Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Innovation as the Path Forward

The challenges identified during the MaS! programme’s field visits and workshops underscore the critical role of innovation in achieving SMS and sustaining open defecation free (ODF) status. Moving beyond basic ODF goals, the programme emphasizes ‘ODF Plus’, which focuses on solid and liquid waste management. Innovative solutions are required for each of these challenges to create a sustainable future for sanitation in India.

The MaS! Programme’s Legacy: A Model for Innovation

The MaS! programme’s dedication to innovation serves as a model for other sanitation initiatives. By fostering collaboration between Government agencies, NGOs, private sector and local communities, the programme creates a fertile ground for identifying and developing context-specific solutions. The programme’s commitment to field visits, stakeholder engagement and continuous learning positions it at the forefront of driving sanitation innovation in India. As the MaS! programme continues its work, its focus on innovation holds immense potential for overcoming sanitation challenges and ensuring equitable access to safe and sustainable sanitation facilities for all.



INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS IN BIHAR AND ODISHA

Taking Hand Hygiene to the Masses

Imbibing Good Hand Hygiene Practices among Children and Communities in Odisha

A girl washes her hands using a SATO tap at school, showcasing effective hand hygiene practices

UNICEF-LIXIL partnership under the 'Make a Splash!' (MaS!) initiative envisioned to promote handwashing with soap for all along with safely managed sanitation (SMS). A primary focus of this partnership is hand hygiene, where efforts are directed towards service enhancement by bridging gaps and introducing innovative

solutions in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector.

One such notable innovation is the SATO tap and a handwashing station that promotes accessible and convenient hand hygiene practices while ensuring minimal water wastage. In Odisha, as part of the UNICEF-

To instill hand hygiene in youth, UNICEF demonstrated SATO tap usage for handwashing at a school, educating hand hygiene practices from an early age



LIXIL partnership, SATO taps were distributed in schools and Anganwadi centres (preschools) to inculcate hand hygiene behaviour among children. This has not only promoted hand hygiene among children but also supported in inculcating good hygiene practices at institutions and households.

‘Dahibara’ is a much-loved local street food in Odisha. People of all ages love indulging in this food item. However, the lack of handwashing facilities for street vendors poses a challenge for curbside eaters. When the ‘Youth4Water Plus’ campaign (a UNICEF Odisha-led initiative) introduced its youths to SATO taps during a meeting on affordable, safe sanitation products, they were impressed and decided to promote the use of these low-cost taps among the street vendors.

To mark Global Handwashing Day 2023, the ‘Youth4Water Plus’ campaign, along with local partners, initiated the ‘Mo Dahibara’ campaign (‘Mo’ meaning ‘My’ in Odia). The youths introduced SATO taps to selected local street food vendors in an identified area, and the response was overwhelmingly positive. Dahibara fans are now happy to use these taps to wash their hands before and after enjoying the delicacy. The vendors, in turn, take pride in installing the SATO taps as it helps raise awareness on the importance of hand hygiene.



Portable handwashing SATO taps displayed at a school in Sambalpur, Odisha



Youths promoting hand hygiene by handing over a SATO tap to a street vendor in Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Handwashing with soap becomes fun with the SATO tap at an Anganwadi centre (preschool) in Angul, Odisha

Breaking Barriers, Changing Norms

Women Masons Lead the
Sanitation Transformation
in Rural Odisha

A woman mason dedicatedly constructing
twin-pit toilets in rural Sambalpur, Odisha

05 03 2023



A woman mason independently constructing a twin-pit toilet in her house in Sambalpur, Odisha



Training of sanitation workers on the use of PPE kits and various options of low-cost sanitation products in Angul, Odisha

One of the eminent components for sustainable sanitation is well-equipped and well-trained masons. Under the UNICEF-LIXIL collaboration, mason training was initiated in rural Odisha to address the gaps in sanitation services, particularly in retrofitting single-pit toilets into double-pit toilets.

Through the collaborative efforts of Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM), Water.org, UNICEF and LIXIL, the local self-help groups* (SHGs) were mobilized, enabling villagers to access loans for building new toilets and retrofitting old ones. However, it became evident that there was a shortage of trained masons within the village to execute these retrofits. Bringing in external masons for the task would have incurred significant costs. Thus, recognizing the need for a sustainable solution, mason training was organized in focused districts of Odisha.

By empowering local masons with the requisite skills and knowledge, this initiative not only addresses the immediate need for retrofitting but also ensures long-term sustainability within the community.

Breaking the ingrained stigma surrounding the absence of women masons in the region proved to be a formidable challenge. The reluctance of traditional male-dominated masonry to retrofit toilets which





Above: A woman mason undergoes practical retrofitting training, mastering new techniques on the ground in Sambalpur, Odisha; Below: Women masons light up the day with their smiles, proving that joy and determination go hand in hand in the world of construction in Angul, Odisha



were already in use added to the complexity. Moreover, the lack of technical know-how among masons further hindered their ability to undertake such projects.

Recognizing the need for a transformative approach, the UNICEF-LIXIL collaboration played a pivotal role in providing system strengthening support. Comprehensive capacity building initiatives, targeted trainings and effective social and behaviour change communication (SBCC) interventions were initiated. UNICEF's commitment extended beyond mere encouragement; they facilitated regular training sessions specifically tailored for women masons, empowering them to excel in their roles.

Under the UNICEF-LIXIL partnership, 1,000 masons were trained, of which 37 per cent are women, who have learned not only essential skills but also newfound sense of confidence and economic independence. This has empowered them to contribute meaningfully to improving sanitation infrastructures, resulting in safely managed sanitation (SMS) in Odisha.

* A mission mode project by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, to organize rural poor women into self-help groups (SHGs) and support them to take economic activities till they attain appreciable increase in income over a period of time to improve their quality of life.

Strengthening Sanitation Markets through Youth Entrepreneurs

Mo WASH Bridges Gaps in Affordable Sanitation and Hygiene Products and Services

Mo WASH Company provides affordable sanitation and hygiene products

Mo WASH Company, an initiative of UNICEF Odisha, is a pioneering social enterprise led by young innovators that promotes affordable sanitation products and bridges the gaps in service delivery. It focuses on addressing various challenges in sanitation and hygiene, including the scarcity of skilled professionals, low-cost sanitation and hygiene products, and existing gender disparities.

Mo WASH created a digital platform through which it links the consumer and the supplier and generates demand for easy and affordable sanitation and hygiene services as well as developed an application that serves as an online marketplace. It connects customers with skilled WASH professionals, including masons, plumbers and electricians, and offers skilling programmes to enhance technical expertise.



The training includes both initial skilling and up-skilling (enhancement) and certification of professionals by the Government



Safety is of utmost importance for the professionals at Mo WASH. They are equipped with protective gear, including hard hats and work boots, as part of their uniform



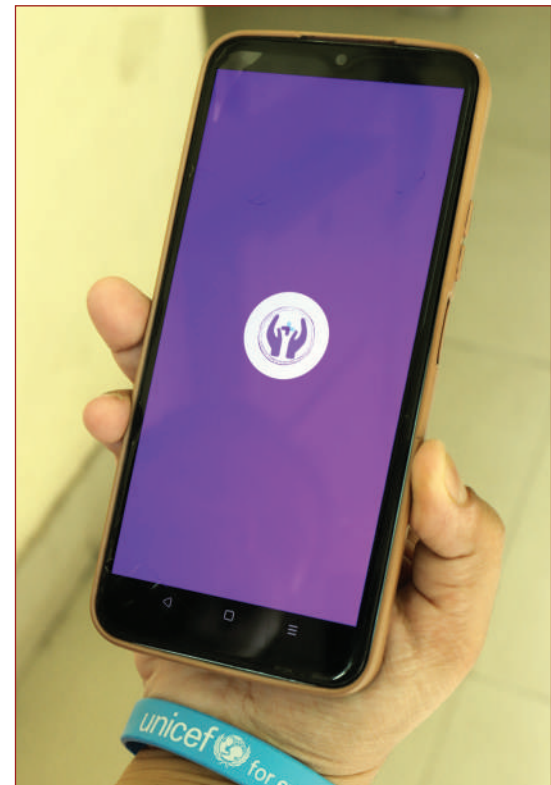
A workshop on safely managed water and sanitation organized by Mo WASH in Bihar



Above: Certified MEP professionals (masons, electricians and plumbers) are deployed based on the demand generated through the Mo WASH app; Right: Developed by young innovators, the Mo WASH app connects skilled professionals with potential customers in both rural and urban areas. The app offers a range of services including plumbing, electrical work, masonry, etc.

Mo WASH Company engages youth, especially women from diverse backgrounds and ethnicities, and follows a community-focused strategy. The approach is in harmony with UNICEF-LIXIL's vision of promoting safe sanitation and hygiene in communities while building competitive sanitation markets.

The platform has created opportunities for 1,550 service providers like masons, plumbers, electricians, etc., catering to the needs of 14,000 customers. Mo WASH has introduced an innovative solution to make sanitation and hygiene products available at the doorsteps of consumers through their on-the-move vehicle - 'WASH-on-Wheels'. WASH-on-Wheels displays various products on sanitation and hygiene with a focus on affordable and



good-quality products from various suppliers. It also features SATO taps and SATO pans (V-traps and I-traps). This has not only raised awareness on accessible and affordable sanitation products but also generated demand, impacting the lives of rural communities in Odisha.



Professional training given to service providers on sanitation by Mo WASH Company in Angul, Odisha

Mo WASH Company addresses immediate sanitation and hygiene needs, contributing towards employment and revenue generation and becoming a transformative force in Odisha's WASH landscape.



Mo WASH strives to achieve gender equality by encouraging women's participation in WASH initiatives, which are areas often dominated by men



Trained professionals of Mo WASH Company showcasing low-cost sanitation products in Odisha



Toilet Clinic: One Stop Shop

Strengthening Safely
Managed Sanitation and
Hygiene Services

Lalita Devi, one of the JEEVIKA Didis, stands in front of the Toilet Clinic at Muzaffarpur, Bihar

The Swachh Bharat Mission [(SBM) Clean India Mission], initiated in 2014, has significantly advanced India's journey to becoming open defecation free (ODF). In February 2020, the Government launched SBM Phase-II to sustain these gains and prioritize solid and liquid waste management (SLWM), along with maintaining the ODF status in rural areas. Despite notable progress, access to safely managed sanitation (SMS) in India remains a pressing issue, which is particularly evident in Bihar. According to the National Family Health Survey Report 5 (NFHS-5), approximately 50.6 per cent of households in Bihar lack access to essential sanitation services, which pose significant challenges to public health and hygiene outcomes. Recognizing this critical gap, innovative solutions are imperative to address the sanitation crisis effectively. The concept of Toilet Clinics, strategically established to provide comprehensive SMS services under one roof, emerges as a beacon of hope in this landscape.

The overarching goal of Toilet Clinics in Bihar is to function as comprehensive hubs that addresses a spectrum of challenges within water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services and particularly prioritizes the promotion of safely managed sanitation and hygiene practices by (i) offering paid masonry and janitor



SATO tap facility at MS Kankhudia School in Araria district, Bihar



Umesh Kumar, SATO Products Dealer, distributes SATO pans and taps for installation in Bihar



LIXIL team visits a Toilet Clinic in Darbhanga district, Bihar

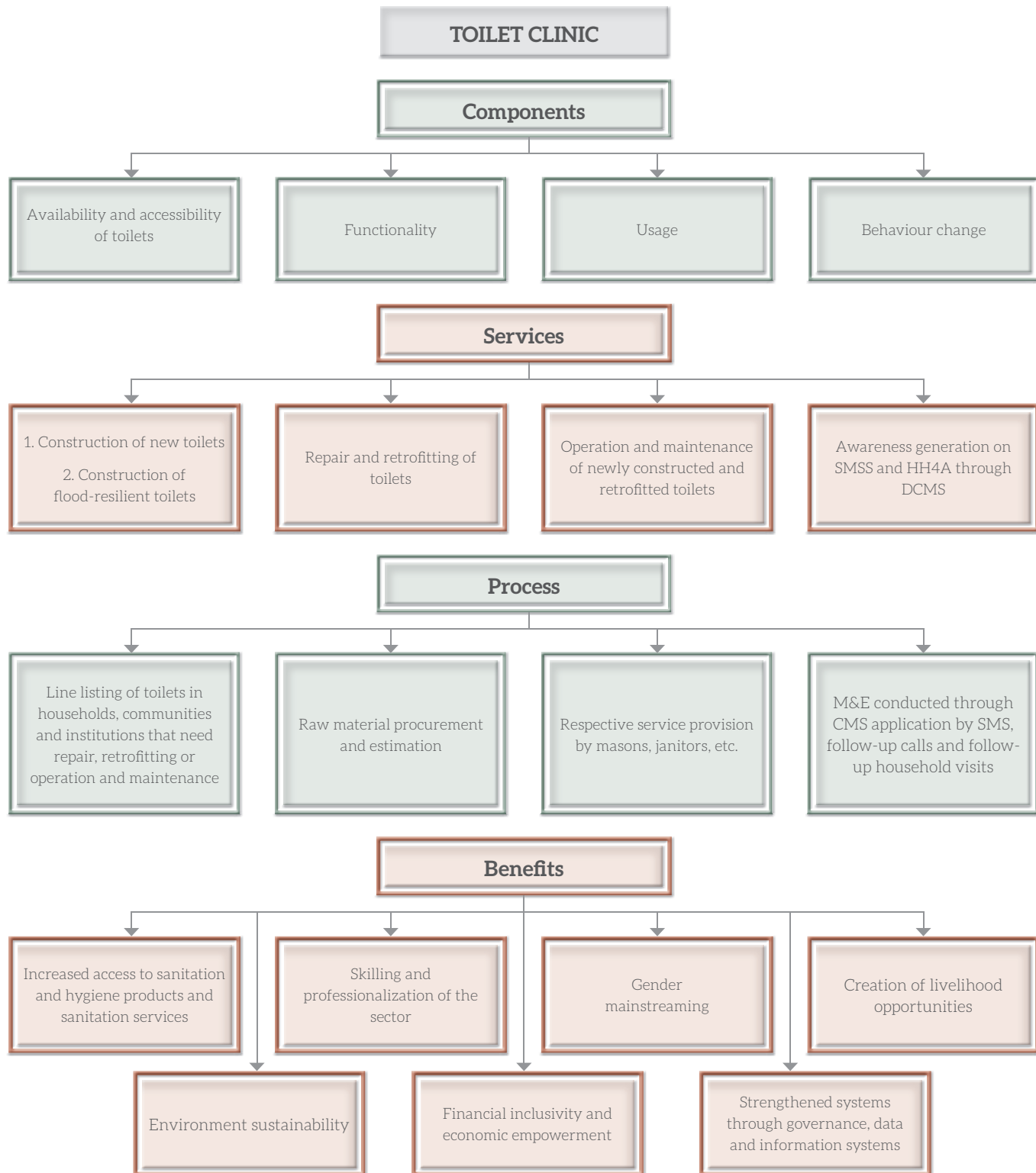
services, (ii) ensuring the availability of essential sanitary products, and (iii) facilitating access to WASH credit. By addressing issues related to the availability, accessibility, functionality and usage of individual and institutional toilets, Toilet Clinics, on one hand, aim to enhance the overall professionalism of the sector and, on the other hand, strive to create livelihood opportunities and strengthen systems through improved governance and data information systems. Additionally, Toilet Clinics employ innovative tools like the DCMS application to generate awareness, which facilitates community engagement and participation in sanitation and hygiene initiatives.



Session on how to use the jet machine for cleaning as part of the janitors training of JEEViKA SHG members in Sakra Block, Muzaffarpur, Bihar



Community mobilizers, Bharat Bhusha Tiwari and Mansoor Alam, promote safely managed sanitation practices





Shivani Yadav cleans the toilet that has been fitted with a SATO pan at her home in Purnea, Bihar

A total of eight clinics have been established across seven districts in Bihar, training 200 masons and 95 janitors to provide comprehensive sanitation services. Notably, over 8,970 toilets with structural damages have been retrofitted and more than 2,349 toilets, previously rendered unusable due to choking or extreme dirtiness, have been successfully cleaned and restored, marking a substantial improvement in sanitation infrastructure across Bihar.

There continues to exist a significant demand for sanitation interventions in both households and institutions across the focus districts in Bihar. With around 400,000 single-pit toilets and 5.7 million septic tank toilets without soak pits in households, as well as a need for new construction and retrofitting in schools and preschool education centres (anganwadis) in the State, there is a clear business opportunity for providing comprehensive SMS solutions. The State Government has set a target of constructing more than 1.06 million new toilets and retrofitting around 120,000 toilets in the current financial year.

In this regard, the Make-a-Splash! (MaS!) programme, a UNICEF-LIXIL partnership, endeavours to promote safe sanitation and hygiene practices by continuing to design accessible and affordable sanitation solutions.



Hands-on training on toilet construction and retrofitting conducted for women masons in Bihar

Galvanizing Youth on Climate Change

Changemakers
Champion Solutions
for Sanitation Impact

Youth members undertake a plogging activity as part of the Youth4Water Plus initiative in Odisha

Recognizing the crucial contribution of the youth in advocating for safe sanitation practices, UNICEF Odisha has mobilized a group of passionate young individuals through the 'Youth4Water Plus' campaign. Initiated in November 2019, Youth4Water Plus campaign, which focuses on small-scale awareness events in colleges linked to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)-related activities, aimed at educating and engaging young individuals.

Youth4Water Plus campaign collaborated with 40 Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from Odisha and beyond including LIXIL, expanding its reach through a variety of activities such as



Youths actively voice their concerns and ideas on WASH-related themes at the Odisha Conference of Youth (OCOY), attended by 150 young participants



The members of the Youth4Water Plus initiative engage in waste quantification by segregating waste, moving a step further towards effective waste reduction and management





Above: Youths actively engage in pond cleaning under the WASH initiative, focusing on environmental health and instilling a sense of responsibility among the communities in Odisha; Below: Young individuals participate in the 'Youth Choupal' – a platform to exchange ideas and brainstorm solutions to WASH challenges

webinars, panel discussions with international and national experts at the Odisha Conference of Youth 2023, celebration of important days such as Global Handwashing Day, and presentation of innovation awards.

The campaign aims to enhance sustainable practices and life quality for vulnerable communities, aligning with WASH and Sustainable Development Goals through sectorwide partnerships and mobilization at all levels. Over 500,000 youths are engaged on social media, and these young advocates are amplifying their voices in policy discussions.



Transforming Sanitation

Gender Transformative Approach towards Sanitation in Bihar

Seema Devi, JEEViKA SHG member, was trained as a janitor in Muzaffarpur district, Bihar



Shanti Devi and Veena Kumari, JEEViKA SHG members, are being trained as masons during a practical session



Cleaning of Anand CLF Building toilet as a part of the janitors training in Sakra Block, Muzaffarpur district, Bihar

India has made significant progress under the Swachh Bharat Mission [(SBM) Clean India Mission], one of the world's largest sanitation initiatives, to improve the coverage of toilets in villages across the country. Under Lohiya Swachh Bihar Abhiyan, over 12 million household latrines have been constructed in the last decade in Bihar, reducing open defecation to a significant extent.* However, the situation in the State is still dire, with almost 50.6 per cent of households lacking access to improved sanitation facilities.#

There is an urgent need for improved sanitation infrastructure and hygiene awareness initiatives to enhance the public health outcomes of the sanitation mission. The continuing challenges of extreme poverty and social mobilization, entrenched attitudes and beliefs, tough physical environments and extreme climate events together hinder progress towards universal access to sanitation and hygiene in Bihar. The functionality and cleanliness of toilets are challenges that remain to be addressed, underscoring the need for repair, retrofitting, regular cleaning, proper collection, treatment and disposal of the faecal sludge/septage.

In response to this gap, Toilet Clinics were conceptualized and established at several locations in the State of Bihar, aimed at providing comprehensive, safely managed sanitation (SMS) services under one roof, including paid masonry and janitor services, sanitary products like traps, pans,

pipes, etc., and access to WASH credit. By consolidating various WASH services, the Toilet Clinic specifically attempts to strategically address the challenges of availability, accessibility, functionality and usage of both individual and institutional toilets.

Women self-help groups (SHGs)[^] under the Rural Livelihood Programmes were engaged to spearhead the operation and management of these Toilet Clinics and transform them into a viable business model. Recognizing the potential of the powerful community body structure of JEEViKA⁺ in optimizing outreach and engagement, a

Below: JEEViKA Didis from Muzaffarpur district, Bihar – Lalita Devi, Usha Devi, Jyoti Sinha, Bina Devi, Sudama Devi and Shanti Devi

strategy was proposed to engage and train SHG members as masons and janitors. The JEEViKA-catalysed community structures can bring about social and behavioural change in the communities by virtue of the depth of their reach and trust within the communities. Additionally, this would result in professionalization and upskilling of the WASH sector, enhancement of employment opportunities for women, and contribution to gender-transformative outcomes and financial inclusion.

^{*} Source: SBM dashboard, 2024

[#] Source: National Family Health Survey Report (NFHS-5)

[^] Self-help groups (SHGs) are women collectives

⁺ JEEViKA is part of the Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society, Government of Bihar, with the objective of social and economic empowerment of the rural poor



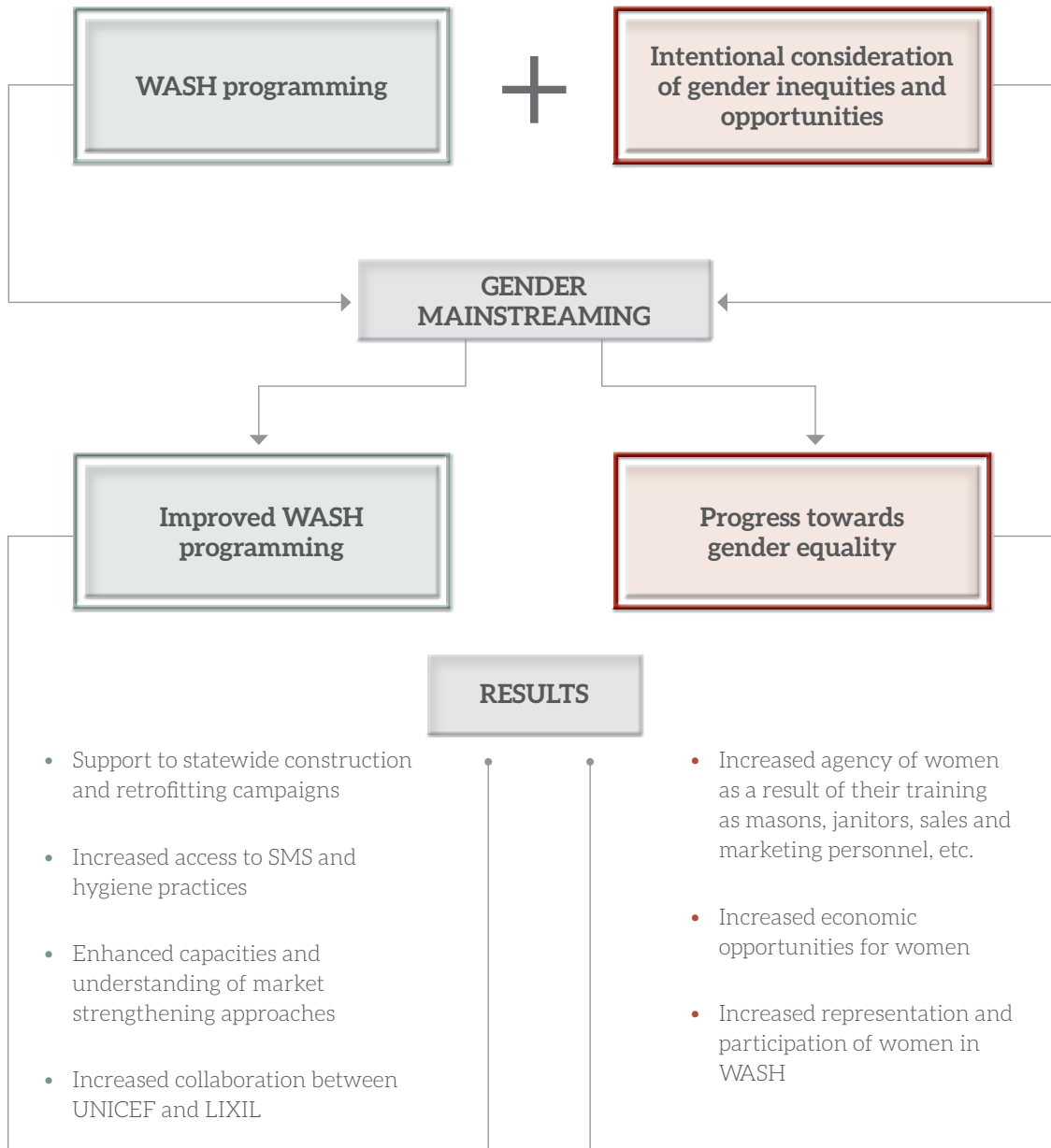


Figure: A flowchart illustrating the key elements of gender-transformative approach leading to effective WASH programming (Source: UNICEF, 2017)



Women Collectives: Financing WASH in Communities

Empowering 2.5 Million
Households for
Sustainable Water
and Sanitation Solutions
in Odisha

Various SHG members meet together to discuss WASH financing at the Gram Panchayat office in Angul, Odisha



Meeting of SHG members regarding WASH credit financing in progress in Angul, Odisha



Attempting to meet the growing demand for toilets, masons are diligently engaged in preparing additional rings for septic tanks in Sambalpur, Odisha

WASH financing is a unique approach initiated by the collaborative effort of Odisha Livelihoods Mission,* Water.org, UNICEF and LIXIL. It aimed to address the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) needs of communities by providing access to financial resources. It involves facilitating access to small loans from mainstream financial institutions or community-based organizations such as self-help groups (SHGs). These funds can be utilized to develop WASH infrastructure, including constructing new toilets, bathrooms, water



filtration systems and water storage tanks, and transforming single-pit toilets into twin-pit systems, etc., thereby ensuring sustainable sanitation practices.

The UNICEF-LIXIL partnership has supported in advocating, anchoring and facilitating WASH financing in Odisha. Approximately 6,000 members of SHGs across six intensive

Below: Members of the SHG have established a concrete ring-making unit to meet the demand for constructing twin-pit toilets in Sambalpur, Odisha



districts have received comprehensive training on alternative financing. More than 13,000 loans amounting to US\$ 1.6 million were sanctioned.[#] This impressive achievement underscored the urgent community need to secure a sustainable WASH solution and significantly contributed to the State's efforts in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6).

^{*} Odisha Livelihoods Mission is a mission mode programme under the Government of Odisha for improving livelihood opportunities

[#] Source: As per records of Odisha Livelihoods Mission, 2023



Women SHGs pledge to leverage WASH financing to meet community sanitation needs in Mayurbhanj, Odisha

Converging Resources for Sanitation

Odisha's Urban-Rural FSSM Promotes Efficient Resource Utilization

Sanitation workers in action at the FSSM plant in Bhubaneswar, Khordha district, Odisha

India has made significant strides towards achieving universal, safely managed sanitation through initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission [(SBM) Clean India Mission] and developing open defecation free (ODF) villages. However, addressing the sanitation value chain, including transportation and treatment, is a crucial component that remains a challenge. In this context, Odisha's Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM) programme has been exemplary, with 119 operational faecal sludge treatment plants (FSTPs) covering all urban local bodies (ULBs) and effectively bridging the urban-rural sanitation divide for safely managed sanitation (SMS).



Sanitation worker, Chintu, ensures safe management of faecal sludge at the FSTP plant in Angul, Odisha



Dry bed of faecal sludge inside a faecal sludge treatment plant (FSTP) in Bhubaneswar, Khordha district, Odisha

Through collaboration between the Department of Housing and Urban Development (H&UD) and the Department of Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water (PR&DW) under the Government of Odisha, supported by UNICEF and LIXIL, the programme aims to extend urban sanitation expertise to rural areas, ensuring a seamless approach to sanitation in all regions.

Presently, 3,552 out of Odisha's 6,794 gram panchayats* within a 20-kilometre radius are tagged with nearby ULBs. This covers 52 per cent of the total gram panchayats, utilizing existing urban septage treatment infrastructure

that caters to 4.7 million households and enables them to avail desludging services.#

A toll-free number (14420)/help desk number has been provided to simplify the process for FSSM services. Currently, 70 FSTPs receive septage trips from rural areas. There are plans to scale up service provision, conduct awareness campaigns and explore the feasibility of small FSTPs in remote areas, with urban facilities serving as training hubs. This urban-rural convergence initiative strives for inclusive SMS regardless of administrative boundaries.

* Gram panchayat is the lowest tier of decentralized rural local government in India, serving as the village-level administrative and development unit.

Source: Minutes of review meeting held between the PR&DW and H&UD Department on 'Implementation plan for URC for FSM'

A transgender team of sanitation workers at the FSSM plant in Bhubaneswar, Khordha district, Odisha



Effective Community Outreach

Advocating Behavioural
Change through DCMS

DCMS application registration and behaviour change monitoring during household visits in Araria district, Bihar



Mobilizing the household members and advocating for safe WASH practices in Bihar



Sanitation Supervisor (SS) explaining the process of application registration to community members in Bihar

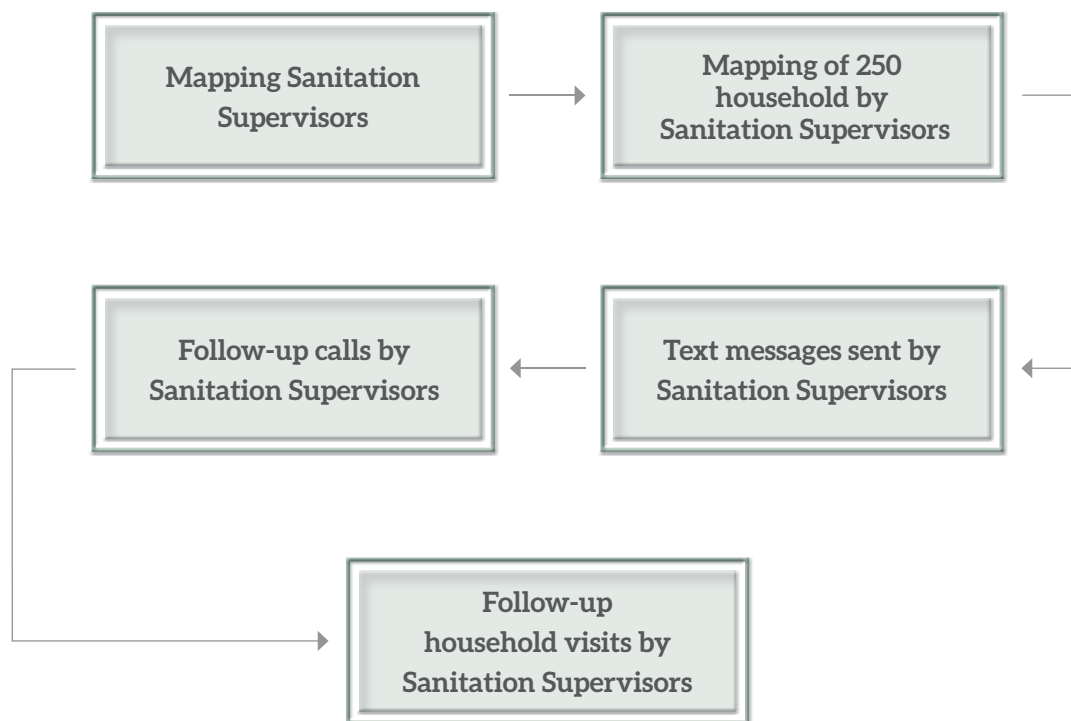
India has the world's second largest internet population, with over 483 million users.* This puts the country at the forefront of the global digitalization race, and its digital journey has been characterized by exuberance. It was only during the COVID-19 pandemic that the world actively experienced this major digital transformation. Prior to the pandemic, interpersonal communication was the preferred communication tool. However, with the onset of COVID-19, things dramatically came to a halt, and digital communication on virtual platforms took over.

The 'Internet Saathi' initiative, originally launched in 2015, aimed to empower women with digital literacy skills. In May 2020, UNICEF revitalized the programme to address the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The cadre was trained by UNICEF Bihar to sensitize community members on key messages and behaviours and to promote the package of messages designed and developed by UNICEF for COVID-19 prevention. The pandemic heightened the importance of Safely Managed Sanitation Services (SMSS) and Hand Hygiene for All (HH4A). This momentum was leveraged by UNICEF, in collaboration with the State Government and the reputable Development Management Institute, as they continued using the 'Internet Saathi' platform as an effective advocacy and behaviour change monitoring strategy.

UNICEF Bihar conceptualized the digital dissemination and monitoring of safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) practices among the rural masses with the following specific objectives:

1. To advocate for and promote behaviour change among the rural communities by encouraging community participation
2. To expand its reach in the rural areas, reaching the vulnerable sections and generating fast and effective communication on safe WASH practices
3. To monitor and track behaviour change among the people on hand hygiene and safe sanitation services

The Digital Communication and Monitoring System (DCMS) operates by initially mapping field animators, also known as Sanitation Supervisors (SS), in the targeted geographies. These supervisors are then tasked with mapping 200-250 households within their respective Gram Panchayats (village units). Following this, messages are nudged to these households by the SS, and subsequent follow-up calls are made to ensure message reception, recall and retention. This process is further reinforced by household visits. Through this iterative approach, the DCMS constantly engages with recipients to track various stages of behaviour change. It ensures end-to-end monitoring by closing the loop, confirming whether the messages were received, read, understood and subsequently implemented in their daily lives.



The DCMS intervention was rolled out by the State Government in 2023 using Government funds. Until December 2023, registered SS from more than 1,600 Gram Panchayats helped in mapping and registration of 252,034 households. About 678,584 sanitation and hygiene messages were transmitted to the registered households, with a 35 per cent reading rate. The DCMS has significantly impacted sanitation with 10,400 retrofitted toilets and about 75,400 new constructions in 2023. Moreover, the initiative fostered acceptability of paying user charges for waste collection, resulting in the collection of INR 14.2 crores.

The DCMS has been widely recognized and appreciated. It recently received the esteemed

ISC-FICCI Sanitation Award 2023 in India in the category of Best Communication: Digital Category in November 2023. Enthused by the reach, penetration and impact of the intervention, Bihar has endorsed the scale-up of the DCMS approach to encompass all Gram Panchayats of the State during the current financial year.

Moving forward, the Make a Splash! (MaS!) UNICEF-LIXIL partnership aims to utilize the DCMS service for seamless message deployment and comprehensive end-to-end monitoring of behaviours related to SMSS and HH4A.

** Source: Mary Meeker Internet Trends, 2019*

Interaction with women on various sanitation messages received through Digital Communication Monitoring System (DCMS) in Araria, Bihar





Sanitation workers at an FSTP plant in Angul, Odisha



ଦୀର୍ଘସ୍ଥାୟୀ ବିକାଶ ଲକ୍ଷ୍ୟ (ଏସ୍.ଡି.ଜି.) ଦ୍ଵାରା ପରିଚାଳିତ
ଗ୍ରାମପଞ୍ଚାୟତ ଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ସହାୟତା ପ୍ରଦାନ ନିମନ୍ତେ ବିଭିନ୍ନ ଗ୍ୟାଟି ମାପରୁ ମାସ୍ତା ନାଭକ ସହିତ
ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ବିଭାଗର ସହଯୋଗୀ ପଦ୍ଧତି ସାଧନ ଏବଂ
ବିଭିନ୍ନ ପ୍ରଶିକ୍ଷଣ ପୁସ୍ତକର ଉଦ୍ଘୋଷଣା କାର୍ଯ୍ୟକ୍ରମ

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ରାଜ୍ୟ ଗ୍ରାମ୍ୟ ଉନ୍ନୟନ ଓ ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ପ୍ରତିଷ୍ଠାନ
ପଞ୍ଚାୟତିରାଜ ଓ ପାନୀୟ ଜଳ ବିଭାଗ, ସହକାରୀ ସଚିବଙ୍କ କାମ୍ପସ୍

Strengthening Institutions on WASH

The WASH Cell Initiative at SIRD&PR in Odisha

S.J. Sushil Ku. Lohani IAS

Inauguration of training modules focusing on WASH in SIRD&PR, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

The State Institute for Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (SIRD&PR) is a prominent institution under the aegis of Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department, Government of Odisha. It is a nodal institute for training, research, evaluation and consultancy in the field of rural development. It organizes various training programmes for elected members, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and different levels of officials of Panchayati Raj and other line departments through both in-house and off-campus mode and develops necessary training modules and curriculum. UNICEF-LIXIL partnership supported in creating a WASH cell comprising expert WASH trainers. The WASH Cell serves as a crucial hub for capacity building of elected members and



UNICEF Odisha and SIRD&PR, Odisha, signed a memorandum of understanding to strengthen the partnership in Bhubaneswar, Odisha



Enhancing capacities of officials and elected representatives on safety of sanitation workers in SIRD&PR, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, by the WASH Cell

Government officials on WASH as well as strengthening linkages among various Government departments to address the WASH gaps in Odisha.

Through tailored training for over 1,20,727 stakeholders* covering all 38 districts of Odisha, including elected representatives and frontline workers, the WASH Cell has empowered them to effectively implement WASH interventions. It assesses training needs, provides supportive supervision and monitors programme effectiveness, contributing to evidence-based decision-making and sustainable development. With strategic partnerships, it catalyses transformational change, fosters resilient communities and ensures equitable WASH access across Odisha.



Above: Participants in SIRD&PR were given practical demonstration on the use of PPE kits by the WASH Cell in Keonjhar, Odisha; Below: Mason training at SIRD&PR on retrofitting of toilets in Sambalpur, Odisha

* Source: As per records of SIRD&PR, 2023





Young students from MS Kankhudia School, Araria district, Bihar

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