



# **Making Sanitation Marketing Work**

The BANGLADESH Story

**Sanitation Marketing combines social and commercial marketing approaches to stimulate supply and demand for hygienic sanitation facilities for the benefit of poor consumers. It focuses on the development of the marketplace and helps entrepreneurs to produce and supply demand-based multiple sanitation products and services. The aim is to effectively empower consumers and provide them with a choice of affordable options in hygienic toilet facilities.**



## Sanitation Marketing in Bangladesh: The Context

Over the last decade, Bangladesh has emerged as a global reference point in experimenting with and implementing innovative approaches to rural sanitation.

The Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach was one such innovation that helped to move over 90 million people from open-defecation towards fixed-point defecation.

Challenges and problems remain in the country, however. Diarrheal diseases are still the second-leading cause of child and infant mortality. On average, 27 percent of households do not have their own toilet, and this number is as high as 50 percent in some areas. According to the Joint Monitoring

Program, improved sanitation coverage is at about 54 percent (2010)<sup>1</sup> and only 37 percent<sup>2</sup> are in fact hygienic.<sup>3</sup> Hence, many toilets do not meet the hygiene standards needed to stop infections from spreading, as they are of low quality.

Further, Bangladesh is vulnerable to floods and cyclonic storms and large areas are regularly inundated, destroying constructed latrines, among other things. The design and quality of construction thus become critical. Sanitation marketing is a strategic step forward from collective mobilization to market mechanisms that encourage households to move up the sanitation ladder.

### The Key Pillars

The main pillars of sanitation marketing in the context of Bangladesh are:

- **Demand Creation:** Communication and product promotion among consumers
- **Product Development:** Consumer-driven multiple design of toilets
- **Market Development:** Capacity-building of local entrepreneurs
- **Inclusion:** Pro-poor business model taken to consumer's doorstep
- **Innovative Financing:** Linking entrepreneurs with micro-finance institutions
- **Quality Control:** Engagement of the local government.

1 Improved Latrines: According to WHO-UNICEF Joint Monitoring Program (JMP), these latrines ensure hygienic separation of human excreta from human contact.

2 *Long-Term Sustainability of Improved Sanitation in Rural Bangladesh*. October 2011. Water and Sanitation Program (WSP), World Bank.

3 Hygienic latrines: This latrine type effectively controls the fecal-oral route of disease transmission. The minimum standard of this entails a pit latrine with slab and water seal, lid, or flap.

## Key Components of Sanitation Marketing Program in Bangladesh

The Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) has designed and implemented sanitation marketing in Bangladesh since 2008. It enables consumers to improve their sanitation status, from low-quality, unhygienic latrines to high-quality, hygienic and user-friendly latrines, along with other healthy practices.

In 2009, WSP selected five villages to house pilot projects and used the learning gained through this experience to further develop and refine the program. By June 2013, operations had been scaled-up to include around 230 villages and support was extended to the Dutch WASH Alliance, International Development Enterprises (IDE),

Plan Bangladesh, and the Max Foundation for scale-up. WSP's main partners are Hope for the Poorest (HP), a local NGO, and Association of Social Advancement (ASA), a Micro-Finance Institution (MFI).

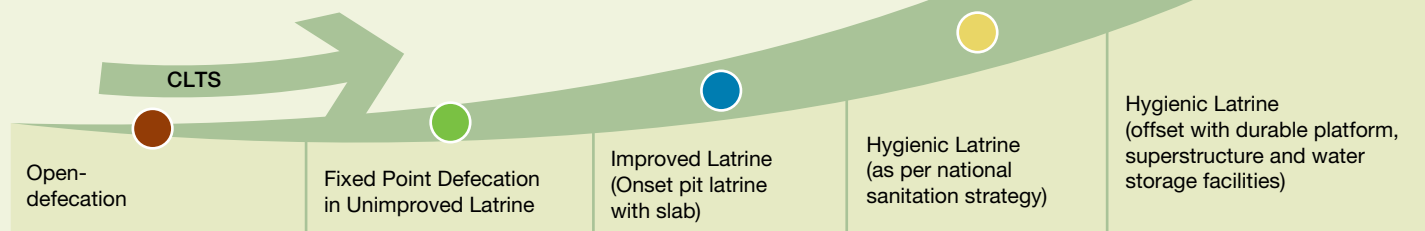
In Bangladesh, rural households mainly use direct pit latrines constructed using three to five rings and a concrete slab with a plastic pan; most lack a water seal.

Some of these pit latrines connect to a water trap that breaks off shortly after it is installed, making the latrine unhygienic, as the contents of the pit are exposed. Offset flush latrines are a higher-quality product. With a little additional investment, the health risks posed by the current style



of latrines could be substantially reduced. Therefore, product and entrepreneur development focusing on simple offset latrines—including construction, with special emphasis on privacy, comfort, and convenience—remains a key part of the strategy for the marketing of sanitation in Bangladesh.

## Strategy for Sanitation Marketing in Bangladesh



CLTS: Community-led total sanitation.



## An Entrepreneur's Success Story

### Capacity enhanced as sanitation businessman

In 2009, Hafiz received four days' training from WSP on the importance of hygienic latrines, different ways of constructing hygienic latrines (including ring and slab), maintaining their quality, and constructing offset pit latrines with water traps using a "siphon" (both single and twin pit). In these training sessions, special emphasis was placed on making toilets user-friendly. Various designs were introduced, featuring different types of latrine platforms and superstructures. Topics discussed included proper doors and the ideal size of a toilet with a water storage or hand-washing facility. In addition to this concrete technical knowledge, Hafiz also gained insights into marketing his products, ways to create demand at the community level, and the benefits of offering doorstep service and hire-purchase options.

Following the training, Hafiz and his wife Salma Begum launched a campaign in neighboring villages, hoping to motivate villagers to install hygienic latrines. They conducted

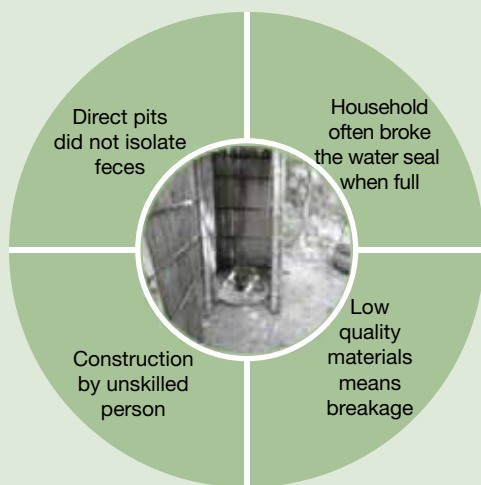


demand-creation sessions to stress the importance and emphasize the benefits of improved sanitary latrines. As they presented photographs of various latrine models along with their cost, many participants approached the couple to place their orders without delay.

In 2009, Hafiz took out a loan in the amount of Tk 150,000 from ASA at a concessional interest rate of 7 percent. Making monthly installments of Tk 14,000, he had repaid his loan within one year. With this credit support, Hafiz expanded his business

to cover approximately ten neighboring villages.

To reach the poorer segment of the community, Hafiz introduced the hire-purchase system (payment in installments) that he had learned of in training. In this system, a household typically pays 20 to 50 percent of the total cost up-front and pays down the balance in equal weekly/monthly installments. Support from ASA allowed him to offer this gradual repayment scheme. Today Hafiz is a respected friend of the villagers and not simply a vendor.





## Outcome So Far

The ultimate goal of sanitation marketing is to make sanitation available and affordable for all. WSP approaches the issue holistically, taking into account the local socioeconomic context to ensure the development of a sustainable model. WSP additionally provides capacity-development support to small local entrepreneurs already involved in the manufacture of sanitary products, offering both skill development to produce multiple options and training in marketing techniques. By June 2013, the program had trained 105 entrepreneurs; of them, 71 had already incorporated the new learning and increased their volume of business. Fifty-one entrepreneurs have now received loans from six Micro-Finance Institutions (MFIs) and NGOs. This financial support is the outcome of WSP's advocacy work, aimed at encouraging the provision of loans to local entrepreneurs by MFIs such as the Association of Social Advancement (ASA) and the Bangladesh Association for Social Advancement (BASA). Entrepreneurs now assured of financial support from MFIs have been encouraged to develop pro-poor business models and strategies—such as accepting payments in installments and offering multiple options with differential costs—at once giving consumers a choice in materials and designs and making them affordable. WSP has also trained NGO field staff in the concept of sanitation marketing and ways to implement field activities, including the identification and training of village-level change agents. Furthermore, project personnel from participating MFIs, local government representatives, and senior staff from NGOs have all been oriented on the benefits

of adopting the sanitation marketing approach in order to create synergy among different stakeholders and promote the concept throughout Bangladesh. Sanitation marketing has thus far resulted in the following outcomes:

- a) Increased motivation in rural communities to move up the sanitation ladder;
- b) A new breed of entrepreneurs skilled in production and marketing;
- c) Willingness among MFIs to invest in the sanitation sector, facilitating credit to entrepreneurs;
- d) Availability of multiple sanitary products in the rural market, with costs ranging from Tk 1,600 to Tk 20,000 (US\$20 to US\$250);
- e) Increased affordability for the poor thanks to the hire-purchase system (payment in installments);
- f) Increased volume of business among small-scale entrepreneurs.



## Customers Testimonials

Golam Mostafa, owner of a small printing press at Jamalpur town, got by for many years with an unhygienic direct pit latrine. Through Hafiz, he learned of the importance of hygienic facilities and agreed to replace his old latrine with a new, improved, twin-pit offset latrine, complete with hand-washing facilities. The estimated cost was Tk 6,500, but Mostafa did not have such a sum. Hafiz offered him the installment option, allowing Mostafa to settle his debt in 10 monthly installments. It wasn't long before Mostafa's neighbors followed his example. Today, not a single unhygienic latrine remains in their cluster. "My wife and daughter feel secure using the latrine. I also now understand the benefits of having a good toilet, specially the comforts of using it," says Mostafa.

Laila Begum, the only earning member of her family, brings in a meager income by sewing clothes. She and the four members of her family had long shared her neighbor's latrine, which embarrassed them, so she decided to construct an improved hygienic latrine on her own premises. Hafiz offered to build her a latrine at a cost of Tk 7,800, to be paid in installments. After putting down an advance, Laila paid the remaining amount in weekly installments. Once the latrine was built, Laila said confidently, "Investing in a latrine was indeed more worthwhile than earning more by investing in my present sewing work. My social prestige has improved after constructing a good-looking, improved latrine and I feel secure, which is more important. Hafiz really opened my eyes."



A beneficiary's  
new latrine



The Sustainable Services through Domestic Private Sector Participation (SS-DPSP) is a global project that seeks to improve the access of poor people to water and sanitation services through domestic private provisioning, both in terms of finance and expertise.

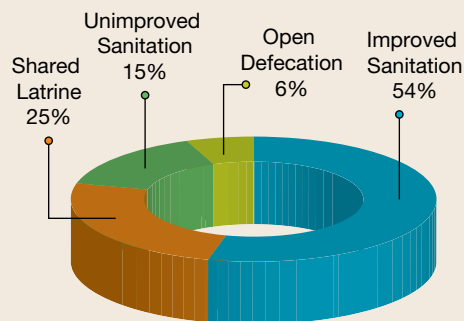
The long-term marginal cost of delivering services is expected to fall with an increase in economies of scale, efficiency, and innovation. The global initiative is focused on the following clusters of activities:

- Banking the “Unbanked”: access to commercial services;
- Developing viable water and sanitation business models for the poor;
- Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in non-traditional sectors.

In Bangladesh, WSP has been facilitating a project in the field

of sanitation marketing called Step for Sustainable Sanitation Services (4S). This initiative is part of the SSDPSP global project to develop a viable business model by enhancing the capacity of local entrepreneurs and linking them with Micro Finance Institutions (MFI) for credit support in an effort to provide affordable and consumer-responsive sanitation products and services that will support the upward movement of rural households from open-defecation-free status to improved quality sanitation.

### JMP 2010: Sanitation Coverage



#### Water and Sanitation Program

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The Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) is a multi-donor partnership created in 1978 and administered by the World Bank to support poor people in obtaining affordable, safe, and sustainable access to water and sanitation services. WSP provides technical assistance, facilitates knowledge exchange, and promotes evidence-based advancements in sector dialogue. WSP is implementing water and sanitation programs in its 23 focus countries across Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, South Asia, and in Washington, DC. WSP's donors include Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, and the World Bank. For more information, please visit [www.wsp.org](http://www.wsp.org)

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