



GBCHealth

Mobilizing Business for a Healthier World

Reaching the Health Millennium Development Goals:

The Critical Role of India's Business Sector

November 13, 2013

Investment Case #6

Corporate Support for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene practices are at the root of many of India's health challenges. Despite halving the proportion of the population without access to safe drinking water, only one in five Indians has access to water piped to their premises. Alarming, one in two Indians has no access to a toilet and in rural areas open defecation is a necessity for 62 percent of the population. Rates of hand washing with soap are low, with only half of the population washing their hands with soap after the toilet and before preparing and eating food. In 2006, the [World Bank](#) estimated that the lack of access to clean water and functional bathrooms cost the Indian economy the equivalent of 6.4 percent of GDP. It is children who pay the heaviest price with unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene triggering a vicious cycle of repeat infections like diarrhea and malnutrition.

[Evidence](#) suggests child mortality is seven times higher in countries with poor sanitation and that lack of access to safe water for drinking, washing and cooking and to toilets contribute to 90% of diarrhea deaths:

1. Clean Water: Access to clean drinking and cooking water close to home improves family health, child survival and reduces the time girls and women spend collecting water. There is an urgent need for centralized, community level and household water treatment solutions as 800 million Indians do not currently treat their water in spite of contamination. Point-of-use disinfection can reduce diarrhea episodes by 45 percent.

2. Toilets: The majority of children under 5 in India have no access to a toilet and 44 percent of mothers dispose of their children's feces in the open. 40 percent of schools in India also lack toilets resulting in an estimated 100 million



school days lost. Girls and women pay a particular price for lack of access to private toilets facilities with up to 30 percent exposed to violent attack due to lack of private and secure toilet facilities.

3. Hand Washing with Soap: Studies show that hand washing with soap is one of the most cost-effective ways to reduce the incidence of diarrhea (by 40 percent) and pneumonia (by 30 percent). At-risk communities should be supplied with quality, affordable soap and should be educated in the community-wide benefits of regular hand washing with soap.

4. Menstrual Hygiene: 300 million girls and women in India do not have access to menstrual hygiene products and many skip school for lack of access to toilets. When girls are not in school there is a greater risk they will be married and begin childbearing so improving access to sanitary products and toilets is an important strategy for both girl's education and child survival.

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Poor water, sanitation and hygiene contribute to 90% of child diarrhea deaths



5

Poor hygiene practices contribute to maternal infection and death



7

Half of all Indians do not have access to a toilet; more than 600 million defecate in the open

Reaching the Health Millennium Development Goals

The Critical Role of India's Business Sector

Investment Case #6

Corporate Support for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

How Can a Corporation Help?

- **Infrastructure, Product Development & Service Delivery:** Provide funding and/or technical assistance to develop quality, affordable household and community water systems, water purifiers, household and community toilets and waste disposal systems, menstrual hygiene products and train people to deliver these services.
- **Advocacy, Awareness, Education and Behavior Change:** Support WASH campaigns targeted to high-risk communities and specific campaigns to empower girls and women as WASH activists.
- **Innovation:** Support new platforms for action (e.g. networks of school-based WASH volunteers) and models (e.g. school toilet franchises).



proposals as part of Grand Challenges India to reinvent the toilet. US\$ 2 million is being offered to support Indian investigators to drive research, development and production of the 'next generation toilet'. The goal is to produce toilets that capture and process human waste without piped water, sewer or electrical connections and transform waste into useful resources, such as energy and water, at an affordable price.

"TATA SWACH"

Created by TATA Chemicals, TATA Consultancy Services and several other TATA companies, this low cost, user-friendly water purifier uses patented TSPF and silver nanotechnology to purify water at the rate of three to four liters every hour without the need for boiling, electricity or running water.

"JAYAASHREE INDUSTRIES"

Invented by entrepreneur Arunachalam Muruganandam, the Sanitary Napkin Manufacturing Machine produces sanitary pads at a fraction of the cost of existing products. 225 machines have been sold across 14 states in India, several to women-run self-help groups.

"WATERWORKS™"

Launched in 2013, Facebook users around the world are connected

with "waterworkers" who teach communities in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh how to disinfect water using Unilever's Pureit sachets and purifiers. The Facebook users can then donate directly to these communities and monitor their water progress. Other partners include Population Services International.

"WASH for INDIA"

a collaboration by Indian social entrepreneurs, WASH for India is launching a set of high impact projects that span infrastructure, service delivery, behavior change and advocacy. across rural and urban India and address four themes: toilets, hand washing with soap, menstrual hygiene and clean drinking water.

"ARGHYAM"

In 2005, Rohini Nilekani founded Arghyam Foundation to provide grants to local groundwater and sanitation projects across 22 states and to support the India Water Portal - an open and inclusive web-based platform that connects water sector practitioners with the public.

"KHARAH VISTAROTTHAN YOJANA"

Since 2002 the Ratan Tata Trust and GE Foundation have been turning the salty coastal water of Gujarat into drinkable water by investing in reverse osmosis plants that will benefit 5,000 households.

Examples of Corporate Support

Corporations who are seeking impact across all of the health-related Millennium Development Goals should consider investments in WASH. There are a growing number of corporate investments in water, but more investments in toilets and hygiene practices are desperately needed:

"REINVENT THE TOILET"

In October 2013, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Indian Department of Biotechnology and the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC) called for



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