



**NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM RELEASE OF REPORT**  
**BRINGING INFORMAL WASTE PICKERS INTO THE**  
**WASTE VALUE CHAIN**

Venue: Magnolia Hall, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi

Date: Wednesday, August 6, 2025

Time: 9:00 AM-2:00 PM



# Keynote Speakers



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**Dr. Rachna Arora**  
**Director, Climate Change and**  
**Circular Economy,**  
**GIZ**



She has been working with GIZ on bilateral projects focusing on Resource Efficiency, Circular Economy, Marine litter and resource management nexus with climate change. She is a TEDx speaker on Circular Economy and has also recently published a book titled Innovating for the Circular Economy – Driving Sustainable Transformation with Taylor and Francis, CRC Press. (Innovating for The Circular Economy: Driving Sustainable Transformation). She holds a doctorate degree in environmental chemistry from Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee. She is a member of several government and private sector led committees on circular economy like the Inter-departmental committee set up by Niti Aayog (Policy think tank, GoI), sectoral committees on Circular Economy Action plan with Ministry of Information Technology and Communication (MeiTY), Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation (MoHUA) etc. She is also a working group member of the FICCI Circular Economy Committee to support industry research and dialogues on Circular Economy. She is also on the advisory board of Jobs in Circular Economy Initiative launched by the Circle Economy Foundation (Amsterdam), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Solutions for Youth Employment (S4YE) Programme of the World Bank Group (WBG).



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**Shri Prabhat Kumar Singh**  
Managing Director,  
NSKFDC



Shri Prabhat Kumar Singh is Managing Director, National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC), (A Govt. of India Undertaking under the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment). He is Indian Engineering Service officer from 1993 batch, He is bachelor in Civil Engg, and Masters in Environment Engg from IIT, Roorkee and MBA from SMU, He has vast experience of 25 years in field of building construction and maintenance, telecom, metro railways, marketing and finance and social sector. Shri Prabhat is also holding additional charge of Dr. Ambedkar International Centre (DAIC), Dr. Ambedkar Foundation (DAF), Babu Jagjivan Ram National Foundation (BJRNF) under the Ministry.



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**Shri V. S. Rana**  
**Director Swachh Bharat**  
**Mission**  
**MoHUA**



Shri V. S. Rana is the Director of the Swachh Bharat Mission–Urban at the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, Government of India. In his current role, he oversees key components of the Mission including Capacity Building, Information, Education and Communication (IEC), and the Safaimitra Suraksha initiative, aimed at ensuring safety and dignity for sanitation workers. Prior to his tenure at MoHUA, Shri Rana served as Director in the Ministry of Home Affairs. He has also held significant roles in the Ministry of Coal and the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, contributing to policy development and program implementation across diverse sectors.



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# Waste Picker





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**Sarika Karadkar**  
**SWaCH, Pune**



Sarika Karadkar (SWaCH), a third-generation waste picker and elected board member of SWaCH, has long been a prominent voice for Pune's waste-picking community. As an active leader within the cooperative, she has represented waste pickers at national and international forums. Most recently, she participated in the International Labour Conference in Geneva as part of the delegation from the International Alliance of Waste Pickers, advocating for stronger social protection measures for informal workers and their families.



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**Faseela J**

**Haritha Karmasena, Kerala**



Sarika Karadkar (SWaCH), a third-generation waste picker and elected board member of SWaCH, has long been a prominent voice for Pune's waste-picking community. As an active leader within the cooperative, she has represented waste pickers at national and international forums. Most recently, she participated in the International Labour Conference in Geneva as part of the delegation from the International Alliance of Waste Pickers, advocating for stronger social protection measures for informal workers and their families.



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**Bibisha Kharnaier**  
**Iainehskhem SHG, Shilong**



Bibisha Kharnaier is one among the 1st Rag Pickers who started working in Dumping Ground (then now Landfill Site) in the year 1985, and in 2014 with the support from the Shillong Municipal Board she and other Rag Pickers in Marten, Shillong Landfill Site formed into a Self Help Group "Iainehskhem" which she was elected as the President of the SHG. Iainehskhem SHG is one among the SHG which the Govt looks for as a resource to impart training to the other groups in the field of Waste Management in Meghalaya. Bibisha Kharnaier is an active member of the All India Waste Pickers Alliance representing Meghalaya. In the year 2019 she attended a workshop in Indonesia on Waste Management. Iainehskhem SHG is also known as Merry Maidens of Shillong.





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# Panellists



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**Paramita Dutta Dey**  
**Head (Resources and Waste)**  
**and Program Lead**  
**NIUA**



She is a city planner with over 27 years of experience in urban development and has been with NIUA for 19 years. She heads the Resources and Waste unit at the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) and is the lead for the Sustainable Cities Integrated Approach Project (SCIAP) at NIUA. She is spearheading the Capacity Building Unit established at NIUA as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission 1.0 and 2.0 (Urban), Govt. of India. She has worked to bridge the gap between infrastructure policy and practice through the South Asia Urban Knowledge Hub and has helped create Innovation Labs on Urban WASH solutions in Indian cities. Paramita has worked with several Ministries in India and with internationally funded projects of UNIDO, ADB, UNDP, CIDA, USAID, the World Bank, and with leading think tanks - the Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE). Paramita has been a speaker at numerous high-level events, including the U-20, BRICS Summit, Global Solutions Summit, and International Circular Economy Forums. Many of her research-based works are published as working papers and research papers on issues related to WASH, Circular economy, urban poverty reduction, land tenure, urban environment, etc.



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**Pratibha Sharma**  
**Project Specialist, Circular**  
**Economy & Chemicals**  
**Management**  
**UNDP**



Pratibha Sharma brings over 13 years of experience in circular economy, chemicals waste management, and inclusive waste governance. She currently serves as a Project Specialist for Circular Economy and Chemicals Waste Management at UNDP India, leading initiatives on environmentally sound management of ozone-depleting substances, and toxic chemicals such as Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs), unintentional POPs under multilateral agreements like the Montreal Protocol and Kigali Amendment. Her work also advances inclusive management of plastics, e-waste, and other materials through circular economy approaches, focusing on policy reform, ecosystem development, capacity building, and integration of the informal sector. Prior to her current role, Pratibha worked with the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA), an international network of more than 800 grassroots organizations working towards environmental justice, sustainable development, and human rights. She was also involved with SWaCH, a cooperative dedicated to integrating wastepickers into formal waste management systems. Pratibha specializes in implementing city-wide decentralized waste solutions, integrating informal workers into waste value chains, and developing participatory governance structures to enable effective policy implementation.



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**Siriesha Darbha**

Capacity Building Expert, National PMU for SBM 2.0

**Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs**



She is an architect and urban planner by training, with over 15 years of experience in sanitation, WASH frameworks, and capacity building. She currently works with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) as part of its National Project Management Unit for Swachh Bharat Mission–Urban through KPMG, where she leads the Safaimitra Suraksha and Capacity Building verticals. Her work focuses on advancing the mechanization of sewer and septic systems across urban India, improving sanitation worker safety, and collaborating with national-level stakeholders to shape policy and advocacy efforts. Her professional journey includes project management of the Swachh Bharat Mission–Grameen under the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, as well as work across WASH in schools.





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**Dr. A. Sasikumar**

**Health Officer**

**Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation**



Dr. A. Sasikumar serves as the Public Health Officer Grade-I at the Thiruvananthapuram Municipal Corporation, where he leads the Public Health Wing. In this role, he is responsible for overseeing and coordinating all public health activities within the city, including disease prevention, sanitation, waste management, and health awareness programs. As the head of the department, he plays a key role in implementing health policies, managing outbreaks, and ensuring the well-being of the urban population through effective public health administration.





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**Harshad Barde**  
**Director**  
**SWaCH Pune**



Mr. Harshad Barde serves as the Director of SWaCH Pune, India's largest autonomous cooperative of women informal waste pickers, and a groundbreaking model for inclusive waste management, where 4000 informal waste pickers provide door-to-door waste collection and sorting services to 10,00,000 properties in Pune saving the ULB 100+ crores per annum.

SWaCH and the Pune Municipal Corporation have achieved exceptional levels of source segregation – diverting significant amounts of recyclables (200 Ton per day) away from landfills and into recycling streams, along with achieving 21 Ton per day of in-situ composting at 280 sites. This women-led community-driven approach not only keeps the city cleaner and reduces material leakage into the environment, but also ensures empowerment, livelihood and dignity for the women at the heart of the system.