
School of Water and Waste, CSE successfully organized a webinar on “Understanding the Septage Desludging Models: What works and What doesn’t work?”. The webinar has received an overwhelming response from 35+ countries (majorly from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Indonesia, South Africa, Malaysia etc.) and 200+ cities worldwide with registrants from diverse background. It attracted more than 800+ registrants out of which 467 registrants have successfully attended through zoom. Besides, the event also witnessed 516 LinkedIn and 805 YouTube livestream viewership.

The aim of the webinar was to understand the issues and challenges in the current desludging practices and developing an effective and appropriate business model for septage desludging that will help in achieving citywide sanitation.

The webinar was kickstarted by Dr Sumita Singhal, Programme Manager at CSE with the context setting and an introductory note. Further Dr Suresh Kumar Rohilla CSE’s Senior Director and Moderator of the webinar discussed the agenda of the webinar and introduced the speakers/experts from national and international regions and described the key necessity of the webinar on such demanding topic. He has also given insights on CSE’s work in the sector of wastewater and septage management.
Our first speaker Mr. Dorai Narayana, an international WASH Consultant emphasized the evolvement as well as key issues and the challenges of onsite sanitation systems in Malaysia. He also explained about septicage management models and wastewater management techniques used across country. As per Dorai, the schedule desludging will only work if we have good regulatory frameworks and all stage proper infrastructure in place.

Another Speaker Prof. Juliet Willetts from University of Technology, Sydney, Australia addressed upon how scheduled desludging could be strengthened by adopting basic approach and support from different stakeholders. She further said proper data collection and governance/finance support is much needed in streamlining the Septage management.

Mr. Budi Darmawan, a private sector FSM consultant from Indonesia has shared septicage management experiences and challenges faced in the cities Jakarta and Surakarta of Indonesia. He gave a complete overview of successful wastewater management model in Indonesia.
Mr. Budi further shared how Indonesian cities are practicing septage desludging with the help of ICT framework and involvement of different stakeholders at different stages across sanitation chain. He has also described the entire process of septage desludging starting from data establishment to service delivery and explained what works and what doesn't work in the Indonesian cities in view of onsite sanitation management.

Mr. Aasim Mansuri, Technical Lead at CWAS (CEPT University) shared how two cities of Maharashtra (Wai and Sinnar) geared up and became role model for the other cities of India in the area of citywide sanitation management. He also emphasizes on the collaborative initiatives taken by the CWAS and local municipality. Further to above he has explained that how zoning and mapping have been done for the town and what method they adopted for the effective monitoring of septage services. He has also given insights on the role of municipality in developing the revenue and taxation model to implement effective citywide sanitation.
Mr. Niladri Chakraborti and Mr. Rajesh Ramamoorthy from IIHS (working for TNUSSP), jointly discussed about different approaches used to strengthen the septage desludging services in the Indian state Tamilnadu. They shared all the steps involved in a SIP promoted hybrid desludging model incorporating demand based, scheduled and clustered approach desludging. Further, Mr. Rajesh has shared ground experiences from a CWIS city Trichy that how they strengthened citywide sanitation by adopting affordable and easy to accept model of septage management.

Ms. Debisha Sharma, Associate Programme Manager at CDD Society, gave insights on government run and Private run models of sanitation service provision. She further shared about different issues and challenges faced by the service providers across the sanitation chain and the suitable approach of overcoming the same. She has also explained the pros. and cons. of schedule desludging and specified what things to be addressed in prior with respect to the routine necessity of service providers.

The webinar has been concluded with a very interactive question & answer session, participants actively participated and seemed to be very much focussed to learn about septage management approaches. At the end of the webinar, CSE’s Senior Director Dr. Suresh Kumar Rohilla delivered a vote of thanks to all the panelists and participants.