Will the construction of millions of toilets end our eternal quest for a sanitation utopia?

Unlikely. India has built its toilets – but that is only a fraction of the work done. The country now has to begin the second phase of its journey on sanitation – that of meeting the challenge of disposal of the massive quantities of solid and liquid waste generated by these new toilets that were built in the first phase of Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen).

This waste has a potential to turn into a deadly health hazard by seeping into our land, our groundwater, and our surface water bodies, and through them, into our food systems and our bodies. The challenge is critical in rural areas, where on-site containment and management is the only solution. In a situation where huge numbers do not have access to clean water or efficient public health systems, if we do not safely treat and reuse faecal sludge it will end up contaminating the available sources of water, reducing supply and adding to the health burden of communities.

The Joint Monitoring Progress Report of 2021 says that there has been an improvement in safe sanitation in rural areas – around 37 per cent of households disposed the excreta onsite safely in 2015 – in 2020 51 per cent of households were reported to dispose the excreta safely onsite. But this is not enough to meet the Sustainable Development Goal of sanitation by 2030. The report flags issues of safe sanitation, stressing the need for management of excreta throughout the sanitation chain, from hygienic toilets, containment and emptying, to conveyance, treatment and, most importantly, reuse. To do this, district-level planning is the need of the hour.

CSE is organizing a two-days virtual national workshop on mainstreaming management of faecal sludge at the district level. The workshop will provide insights into district-level planning for rural faecal sludge management. It will comprise of presentations and discussions on various topics related to treatment and safe reuse of solid and liquid waste from toilets.

Key takeaways
• Need for safe sanitation – issues and challenges
• Overview of onsite sanitation systems – in-situ treatment and retrofitting
• Overview of faecal sludge treatment technologies
• Reuse options for faecal sludge
• Legal, institutional and financial frameworks for safe sanitation
• Broad outlines for district-level planning

Application
The workshop has been designed for Swachh Bharat Mission officials involved in district-level planning for faecal sludge management. The workshop is fully funded and will accept nominations from state governments on a first come-first served basis.

It is essential that applicants have computers and a steady internet connection. The applicants can write directly to the workshop coordinators.

Last date for applying: November 22, 2021

Special feature: Top 10 participants will get a chance to attend CSE’s residential training on the same subject to be conducted in December 2021. The decision of the expert committee for grading the participants on the basis of their performances in the workshop will be final.

WORKSHOP COORDINATOR
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