



What is an SFD?
An excreta flow diagram (also often described as shit flow diagram, SFD) is a tool to readily understand and communicate visualizing how excreta physically flows through a city or town. It shows how excreta is or is not contained as it moves from defecation to disposal or end-use, and the fate of all excreta generated. An accompanying report describes the service delivery context of the city or town.

- SFD is**
- A tool for engineers, planners and decision-makers
 - Based on contributing populations and an indication of where their excreta (septage or sewage) goes
 - A representation of public health hazard
 - An effective communications and advocacy tool
 - An overview from which sanitation priorities are developed

- SFD is NOT**
- Based on actual volumes/ mass – these are determined by other related factors
 - A representation of public health risk (risk = hazard x behavior)
 - A precise scientific analytical tool

Purpose of an SFD
SFDs are a useful tool to inform urban sanitation programming. They offer an innovative way to engage city stakeholders like political leaders, sanitation experts and civil society organizations in a coordinated dialogue about excreta management. They can also be used for advocacy.

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