

SOCIAL INNOVATIONS FOR IMPROVING URBAN SANITATION: LESSONS FOR SCALING-UP

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DEFINING SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF STUDY

Relevant Definitions of Social Innovations

- **Finding alternatives to 'established' solutions** (namely technological innovation) to social problems or needs
- **New idea has the potential to improve either the quality or the quantity of life**
- Fore-grounded in the ethical position of **social justice and social inclusion**. Social innovations are changes in **agendas, agencies, and institutions** leading to a better inclusion of excluded groups and individuals in spheres of society.
- Goal of meeting a social need, and that is predominantly developed and diffused via a **network of organisations that primarily work on social issues**.
- Involves **the transformation of social relations in a space**.

DEFINING SOCIAL INNOVATIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF CURRENT STUDY

- Social innovation entails a chain of *processes towards finding new solutions* (ideas, processes, models) to meet social needs
- Social innovations contributes to *social change* by influencing *social practices*
- Social innovations are driven by the *intention to produce sustainable and scalable solutions* (and not solely profit motif) derived from local contexts, in order to address societal issues

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Collaborative study aim to document the organisation's

- History and trajectory
- Social innovations in urban sanitation
- Impacts of the social innovations
- External policy influence on social innovations
- Networking and partnerships
- Key challenges in initiating and scaling-up social innovations

PROFILE OF COLLABORATING ORGANISATIONS

	Mobilisation & Implementation	Pilot Implementation	Research	Capacity Building	Policy Advocacy	MFIs/ Funding	Networking & Federations
CSE		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Shelter Associates	✓	✓		✓			
Gramalaya	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
CURE	✓	✓		✓			
UMC			✓	✓	✓		
FANSA							✓

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	Mobilisation & Implementation	Pilot Implementation	Research	Capacity Building	Policy Advocacy	MFIs/ Funding	Networking & Federations
SKA	✓		✓		✓		✓
CDD		✓	✓	✓	✓		
Nidan	✓			✓	✓		✓
Swach	✓			✓	✓		✓
INSPIRATION			✓	✓	✓		

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **“ORGANISING THE UNORGANISED”** – amplifying voices of the poor and marginalised and collectivising the strength of poor
 - Changing power relationships within society as well as between community and service providers
 - Empowering communities to participate in planning, implementation, monitoring, operation and maintenance of services – enhancing access, reliability and sustainability
 - Catalysing women’s groups and imparting skills and capabilities
 - Organising mass campaigns on behaviour change

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **“MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE”** – through data visualisation, using technology in urban planning
 - Collecting spatial data in the form of maps drawn using plane table survey
 - Showing the location of low-income households and other community resources
 - Collecting socio-economic data through settlement level and census household surveys
 - Integrating and overlaying data from all sources in GIS/Google Earth
 - Training and involving community in data collection using technology not only generated authentic data but also an empowering experience

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **COMMUNITY RESPONSIVE AND COMMUNITY LED TOILETS** – a paradigm shift to increase accessibility and address operation & maintenance problem
 - Responding to community’s preference, particularly women, elderly and children
 - A model based on “shared contribution” and “shared ownership” (*cost sharing, creating Toilet Savings Fund, etc.*) – community awareness & education
 - Improved usage of toilet by all members of the household
 - Instilling sense of safety and security among girls and women
 - Improved health & hygiene education among family members particularly among children

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **“RELIVENING” THE ISSUE OF SAFETY AND DIGNITY** – breaking the vicious cycle of caste – oppression – dehumanisation – poverty
 - Denial of the existence of manual scavenging – a worst form of human rights abuse
 - Generating evidences that manual scavenging still exists despite policies and laws that are suppose to prohibit this inhuman practice
 - Mobilising and organising sanitation workers – a self-empowering experience and challenging the “destiny”
 - Building alliances with individuals within the governance institutions

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **“CONNECTING THE DISCONNECT”** – remodeling the septic tank and sewerage system
 - The Cluster Septic Tank (CST) consists of home toilets, a shared septic tank and a Decentralised Wastewater Treatment System (DEWATS)
 - Toilets constructed at home are linked through a manhole to a simplified sewer system that carry the waste to the CST
 - The CST has a retention capacity of a year and the overflow is treated by the DEWATS
 - The treated water is stored in tanks and is available for reuse

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **WASTE PICKERS BECOME “BAREFOOT” WASTE MANAGERS** – a partnership approach between waste pickers, community, and municipality
 - Collection, segregation, recycle, reuse of waste – a livelihood source for hundreds of waste pickers with dignity and respect
 - Waste pickers have become educators for residents on responsible waste management
 - Production and sale of disposal bags and labels for sanitary towels and diapers
 - Providing decentralised waste recycling centres by municipality helped in reducing transportation costs and ensured door-to-door collection of waste

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **BUILDING CAPACITIES OF MUNICIPALITIES** – accountability through performance management – monitoring, assessment, benchmarking and planning
 - Facilitating learning from best practices
 - Formation of professional associations of “city managers”
 - Providing training and skill building
 - Initiating Urban Indicators and Performance Management Programme
 - Performance Assessment System (PAS)
 - Aligning with Service Level Benchmark (SLB)

LESSONS FROM SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ **USING ACTION RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY FOR POLICY CHANGE –** demonstrating decentralised model, setting precedence, and disseminate lessons
 - Generating awareness among policy makers across India, from a technical perspective, about **decentralised solutions** for sanitation and waste water
 - Decentralised Waste Water Treatment System (DEWATS) and Decentralised Solid Waste Management (DESWAM) which are cognisant of context and geographical variations
 - Adapting technology where electricity is not reliably available, skilled manpower is hard to come by and mechanical parts that break may never be repaired

QUESTIONS CONFRONTING SCALING-UP OF SOCIAL INNOVATIONS

- ▶ Can social innovations be scaled up while retaining their “local” context sensitivity? Standardisation to what extent?
- ▶ How do we enhance the impact of social innovations in addressing gender-caste based structural inequalities? How do we measure?
- ▶ How do we ensure that knowledge and techniques employed to social innovations remain “common public good”?
- ▶ How do we foster an enabling eco-system for social innovations to continue to flourish? Who plays what role?