

THE CHALLENGES OF ECOLOGICAL SANITATION

IN

COASTAL SOUTH INDIA

A CASE STUDY

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RAIN CENTRE

IS A ONE-STOP INFORMATION

AND

ASSISTANCE CENTRE

FOR

RAINWATER HARVESTING

THIS FIRST RAIN CENTRE
IN THE COUNTRY WAS SET
UP IN CHENNAI

WAS INAGURATED BY THE
THEN CHIEF MINISTER OF
TAMIL NADU

IN AUGUST 2002

SANITATION ISSUES

IN

1. RURAL AREAS

2. PERI-URBAN AREAS

3. URBAN AREAS

SANITATION

All about Human
defecation
&
Its Disposal

THOUGH ALL OF US
DEFECATE IN ONLY ONE
WAY

ITS DISPOSAL IS BROADLY
OF SIX DIFFERENT TYPES

SIX DIFFERENT TYPES

**1. OPEN DEFECATION – DRY – IN
ALL THREE AREAS**

**2. SOAK PITS/PIT LATRINES – WET –
IN RURAL & PERI-URBAN AREAS**

**3. SEPTIC TANKS – WET – WELL &
NOT-SO-WELL DESIGNED IN PERI-
URBAN AREAS**

SIX DIFFERENT TYPES

**4. OPEN MUNICIPAL DRAINS –
WET – IN PERI-URBAN AREAS &
SMALL TOWNS**

**1. UNDERGROUND SEWERAGE
SYSTEM – WET – ONLY IN CHENNAI**

**6. ECOLOGICAL SANITATION – DRY –
ULTIMATE IN SANITATION**

**WHILE SOAK PITS, SEPTIC
TANKS AND ECOSAN ARE
AT THE MICRO LEVEL**

**OPEN DEFECATION, OPEN
DRAINAGE SYSTEMS AND
UNDERGROUND
SEWERAGE SYSTEMS ARE
AT THE MACRO LEVEL**

OUR ACTIVITIES IN ECOSAN

PLACE: KOVALAM

WITH
COSTAL AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Kovalam

is an ancient coastal town

30 kms. South of Chennai

6 Habitations – a fishermen's kuppam (largest), 3 dalit settlements and 2 Islamic habitations.

Why Kovalam?

Close to Chennai

Fast developing peri-urban area

Shrinking of open spaces making
open defecation difficult

Need for toilets increasing

Why Kovalam?

Good Groundwater – water table
high during post-monsoon

Almost everyone has a plot of land
and a house – thanks to tsunami

**BUT NO TOILETS IN A LARGE
MAJORITY OF THEM!!!**

First Phase

* Awareness Raising since 2005

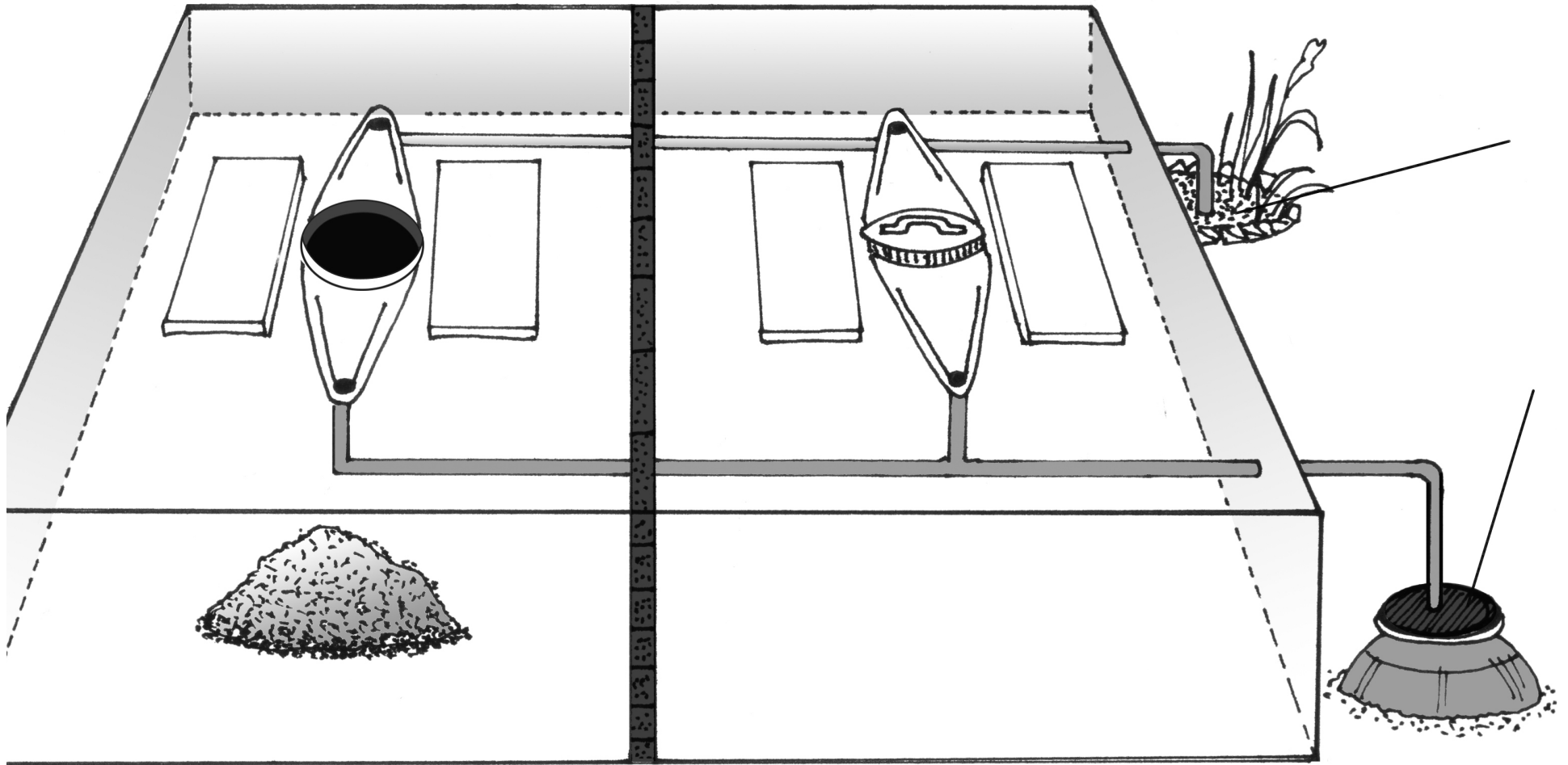
* First Toilet in 2006
supported by IITM 1970

* 9 Toilets in the Kupparam and Dalit
Settlement in 2007-08

Supported by FAKT, Germany &
Arghyam, Bangalore







எருவாதும் கழிவறை
அமைப்பு:
சூகாஷ் கங்கா அறக்கட்டளை
CH: 90
FINANCED: FAKT, GERMANY
ARGHYAM, BANGALURE
APRIL: 2008



* 12 Toilets in Kovalam kuppam
and 5 in Pungeri by Japan
Students Fund in 2007-08

* Students were from the
Institute of Buddhist Economics,
Komazawa University, Tokyo,
Japan

Handed over to the residents by
the Consul General of Japan



* Twin squatting pans

* Initial Cost was Rs. 10000 in
2007-08

Rs. 2000/= from the
beneficiaries (Rs.1000 at the time
of booking and Rs.1000 after
completion)

Second Phase

- * Under IBEKU – JICA Grant 29 toilets in Kovalam – dalit habitat and 10 more in Pungeri were constructed in 2009-10
- * Handed over to the residents by Ms. Pamela Walsh, Founder, Friends of India, Geneva



*These have the Calvert type
pans and provision for bathing

Cost Rs. 14,000

Total ecosan toilets constructed

First Phase

- * 10 by our Akash Ganga Trust
- * 17 by Japan Students Fund (5 in Pungeri)

Second Phase

- * 29 JICA in Kovalam
 - * 10 by JICA in Pungeri
- Total 66 toilets

Social Aspects - Attitudes Psychological

- 1. Cannot defecate within four walls**
- 2. Not a priority**
- 3. Faeces remain within the premises**
- 4. Why are we given ecosan instead of flush toilets?**
- 5. Difficult to convince them about eco-friendliness of ecosan**

Social Aspects - Attitudes

Financial

1. Got several things free as tsunami relief from global and local NGOs

2. Got houses built by the Govt, and NGOs, which did not have toilets!!

3. Got colour TV, Gas stove and connection free from the Govt.

Why don't you give us free toilets?

Social Aspects – Mistakes in first phase

- 1. We did not involve the residents in planning**
- 2. Our partner NGO within the town was preoccupied in other projects**
- 3. Did not employ a suitable person as coordinator**
- 4. Did not insist on their contribution**
- 5. There was no follow-up**

Social Aspects – Reasons for success in second phase

1. Spent quite a bit of time in talking to people about the need for toilets

2. Conducted a “participatory social mapping of the colony” involving women

3. They realised that they were surrounded by shit

Social Aspects – Reasons for success in second phase

4. Conducted group walks to inspect open defecation areas

5. Agreed to include a bathing space inside the toilets

6. Helped construct a well to solve their problem of no water

Social Aspects – Reasons for success in second phase

7. Agreed for easy monthly instalments of Rs. 200 for ten months

8. Trained a few of them as animators to periodically inspect the toilets

9. Everyone in the colony agreed to build a toilet and did so

Lessons Learned

- 1. Total sanitation takes time.
Community education and
participation critical**
- 2. People have to help pay for their
own toilets**
- 3. Govt.'s welfare schemes develop a
culture of dependency – No one wants
to pay for toilets**

Lessons Learned

4. Identifying, training and employing one or two of them to monitor is very important

5. Focus should be on a small geographical area till it achieves critical mass

6. Women should be involved in helping design the toilets

The Future

1. Historical Study – Ancient History, Recent past history, oral history

2. What does various religious scriptures say on defecation practices and its disposal?

3. Ecosan toilets are more expensive than pit latrines

The Future

4. Find out ways and means of reducing the cost

6. The role of the government has not been very sanitation-friendly

5. Community toilets in rural and peri-urban areas is the only way for cost-effective sanitation

GENERAL REMARKS

- 1. IN PERI-URBAN AREAS THE NEED FOR SANITATION HAS INCREASED**
- 2. WHILE OPEN DEFECATION IS BAD, WHAT THE PANCHAYATS & MUNICIPALITIES ARE DOING IS EQUALLY BAD**

GENERAL REMARKS

**3. IT IS A SHAME THAT HOUSES
WERE BUILT WITHOUT TOILETS**

**4. WHEREVER THEY HAVE BUILT
TOILETS THEY ARE EITHER PIT
LATRINES OR BADLY DESIGNED
SEPTIC TANKS**

GENERAL REMARKS

5. There is a confusion whether ecosan toilets are composting or dry toilets and whether EM can be used or not

6. SUBSIDY IS TOO SMALL:GOVT SHOULD BE ASKED TO INCREASE IT TO Rs. 5000/=

Thanks to

1. IIT Madras Alumni 1970

2. FAKT, Germany

3. ARGHYAM, Bangalore

4. JAPAN STUDENT'S FUND – IBEKU

5. NARAYANAN, CRDT

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2. **“The Toilet papers” Sim Van der Ryn (1978)**
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QUOTATION

All the human and animal manure, which the world loses if returned to the land instead of being thrown into the sea, would suffice to nourish the world

...Victor Hugo, 1862

“Shit”

should no longer be
a bad word

THANK YOU