

Signpost To Bali

WORLD WATER FORUM 2024

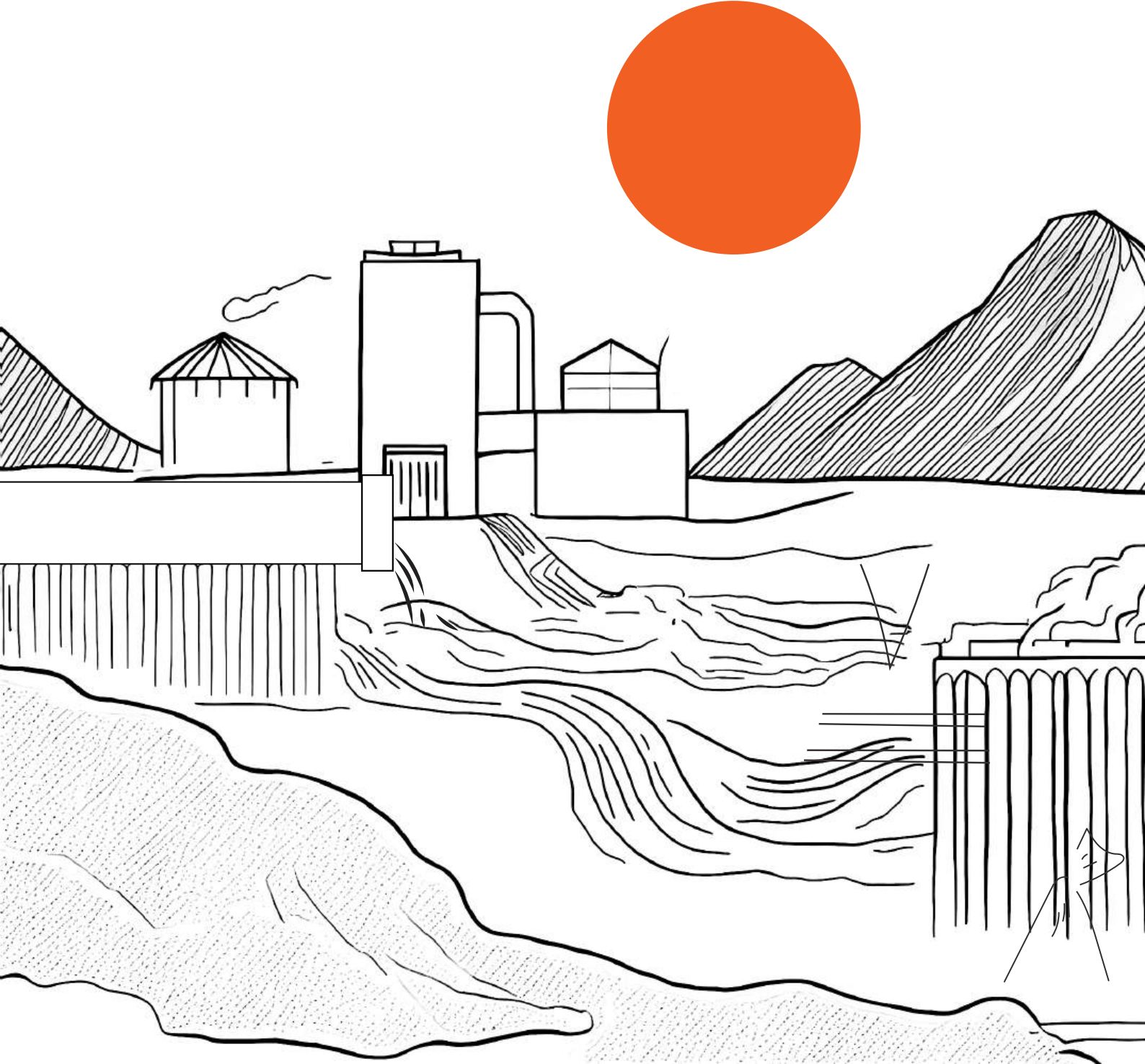
Community Engagement for Safe and Inclusive Sanitation

INSIGHTS DOCUMENT



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Context

World Water Forum, to be held in Bali this May, is an international forum held every 3 years, bringing together several stakeholders including government officials, multilateral institutions, academia, civil society and the private sector to learn and share best practices, case studies, innovative models, successes and failures based on their experiences of working in the water and sanitation sector globally.



As a precursor to the World Water Forum, the **Signpost to Bali** webinar series was hosted, with the aim of highlighting community voices, especially those of women and youth, across the sanitation value chain. The first session titled **'Community Engagement for Safe and Inclusive Sanitation'** highlighted the need for enhanced service delivery while keeping the most vulnerable communities at the forefront.



The Need for Community Participation to Enable Inclusive Sanitation

Globally,

- ▶ Nearly 1 billion people live in slums with limited access to safe sanitation services, and
- ▶ In cities in low and middle income countries, over 50% of human waste is discharged without treatment.¹

Poor sanitation and hygiene has a multiplier effect, which in turn results in high levels of disease, environmental degradation, and negatively impacts economic activity and growth, and urban development. With South Asia's growing urban population, it is the need of the hour to ensure the provision of basic sanitation services to low income communities, who are impacted the most due to inadequate facilities.

While there are several initiatives being undertaken across countries in the South Asia region, these may not often account for challenges faced by communities on the ground. It is also important to note that involving the community at stages of the lifecycle of an initiative ensures sustainability of positive impacts created, and of the program itself. There is therefore a need to ensure

An Initiative from Sri Lanka

The Government of Sri Lanka works with over **500 Community Based Organizations (CBOs)**, facilitating deeper understanding around the gaps they face, including training and resources. This collaboration highlighted the key challenges at the **community level, and areas where the Government needs to contribute**, allowing them to develop targeted interventions

that the voices of the most marginalized are being heard, and leveraged intentionally, for the planning and design of interventions and policy. Coupled with this, there is a need to enhance accountability and ownership of initiatives, with stakeholders such as the government, private sector, and the community, acknowledging that it is their collective duty to ensure suitable implementation of initiatives, garnering the need for collaboration to ensure access to safe and inclusive sanitation for all.

¹ <https://s3.amazonaws.com/resources.cwis.com/learning/88/BMGFCWISFactsheet.pdf>



Deep Diving into Challenges and Key Initiatives Undertaken

While countries across South Asia are working towards attaining Sustainable Development Goal 6, there are various challenges faced across the sanitation value chain that need to be considered. Detailed below are some examples of challenges faced, along with initiatives that have been undertaken across the region to improve and enhance inclusive sanitation outcomes.



Challenges



Risks Faced by Sanitation Workers Across the Value Chain

- ▶ Out of reported incidents, **78% of sanitation worker deaths occur in septic tanks** due to manual desludging. Further, more than 2 people die per incidence due to lack of evacuation training
- ▶ Sanitation is also a highly gendered sector, with **only 30% of workers engaged in the value chain being women**. Further, given that the riskiest work is cleaning of sewer lines and septic tanks, it is also the highest paying, where engagement of women is less than 1%²

Initiatives Undertaken

Ensuring Safety and Dignity of Sanitation Workers: An example from India

- ▶ The **Garima scheme** was launched in Odisha to **enhance the safety and dignity of the core sanitation workforce**, with detailing of roles across the value chain
- ▶ The rollout of the scheme commenced with **mapping the workforce**, and detailing metrics to enhance occupational, social and financial safety
- ▶ Over **1 lakh workers** were surveyed and validated through a **Beneficiary Management System (BMS) called Sanitation workers Health, Welfare and Safety (SHWAS)**, meaning Breath- in Sanskrit.
- ▶ Once the workers were identified, they were **provided with ID cards and linked with health check-ups**. They have also been recognized as highly skilled and skilled workers by the labour department, **increasing their minimum wage amounts**, and providing them with **risk and hardship allowance**
- ▶ Further, for circumstances where machinery could not be used for cleaning due to confined spaces, **protocols were defined for safe entry**
- ▶ Along with **standardization of Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs)** to be worn, Garima Grihas have been established as resting lounges for workers, and a **training ecosystem** has been created
- ▶ This work enabled growing recognition on the need for sanitation worker's safety, resulting in the Garima scheme being **scaled at a national level** through the **Namaste scheme (National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem)**

² <https://umcasia.org/>

Challenges

The Need for Community Institutions

- ▶ While there has been a focus on building sanitation infrastructure, there is also a strong need to focus on the management and maintenance, while ensuring that the communities involved have a voice in how this infrastructure is created
- ▶ To this end, there is a need to bring insights from area level federations to city governments when they are planning sanitation infrastructure

Community Level Challenges

- ▶ Schools, offices and public places lack women and Menstrual Health Management (MHM) friendly WSH facilities, even though regulation states a requirement of the same
- ▶ This lack of infrastructure is coupled with insufficient capacity of service providers and a lack of political will, with women often excluded from decision making, and poor coordination among stakeholders

Initiatives Undertaken

Engaging Self Help Groups (SHGs) in the Sanitation Value Chain: An example from India

- ▶ Given that the sanitation workforce is primarily informal, efforts were undertaken to **bring them under the SHG Umbrella (Self-Help Group)**
- ▶ Members of these SHGs have been **provided contracts** to manage public toilets and Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) directly from the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)

Strengthened Women Led Networks to Enhance the Ecosystem: An example from Pakistan

- ▶ To tackle these challenges, a **7-member women network team** was created, to work collectively to **provide training** and **educate people** on the need for safe sanitation practices
- ▶ Given that these women are leaders in the community, they inspire others, and **foster a sense of responsibility**. Further, directly interacting with community members ensures that the **interventions undertaken are culturally sensitive**
- ▶ The group also engages with the Tehsil level government, and aims to **channel further funding** towards inclusive sanitation initiatives by mobilizing key stakeholders



Challenges

Challenges with Government Accountability and Low Budgetary Allocations

- ▶ The SANIMAS (Sanitasi Berbasis Masyarakat which translates to Community Based Sanitation) approach is a community led sanitation program in Indonesia, focused on empowering cities to take collective action to eliminate open defecation and improve sanitation and hygiene practices. Around 22,000 SANIMAS systems have been established in Indonesia, serving around 6 million people, in which certain challenges have been identified around service delivery.
- ▶ Due to the informal ownership of sanitation assets, the budget allocation for Operation & Maintenance (O&M) and local government support is limited, as seen in SANIMAS.
- ▶ There is a need to improve the management, training, operation, and inclusiveness of community-based sanitation models and systems.

Challenges with Community Level Awareness

- ▶ While there is awareness on the need for toilets and pit and septic tank connections, only 10% of septic tanks conform to design standards, keeping safely managed sanitation levels low
- ▶ Further, there is a lack of awareness of the impact not practicing scheduled desludging has on water quality. Additionally, there is also a stigma around desludging trucks visiting households, making members of the household uncomfortable

Initiatives Undertaken

Recommendations to enhance SANIMAS in Indonesia

- ▶ An independent evaluation was undertaken to assess the successes and limitations of the SANIMAS approach, integrate lessons from other investment programs, and introduce a next phase as a sustainable approach for the provision of decentralized sanitation in future investments, making it a **community supported and not community based initiative**
- ▶ Given the issues with asset ownership, there is a recommendation to create a **clearer local government and community readiness criteria**, with a focus on post-construction responsibilities
- ▶ There is also a need for **cooperation between community groups and the local government** to co-manage and operate the systems both technically and financially, and to therefore establish or strengthen a sanitation management unit in all cities
- ▶ Further, even though training has been provided, there is low knowledge on O&M of systems, and therefore a need for a **communications strategy for local government and community**



Comprehensive Integrated Sanitation Campaign: An example from Indonesia

- ▶ The **#DihantuiTai (Haunted by the Poo) campaign** was designed with civil society, integrating humour and discomfort to spark a conversation and raise awareness
- ▶ The campaign entailed a superhero personality combatting poo, **contextualized to Indonesian preferences**
- ▶ The campaign **reached over 80 million people**, with over 10 million views on the videos
- ▶ The campaign connected people to a **dedicated website**, with details around how to ensure their septic tanks are safe, how to avail funds, updates on regulations and where to find desludging services



Challenges

Challenges with Political Will

- ▶ Mayors have competing priorities, with health and education topping the list, making sanitation a non-primary concern
- ▶ There is also a lack of staff capacities, coupled with inadequate regulations in sanitation

Initiatives Undertaken

National Safely Managed Sanitation Roadmap: An example from Indonesia

- ▶ In order **to ensure sanitation was imbedded into national priorities, it was linked with other thematic areas**, such as health, to channel more funding
- ▶ Post generating demand through the #DihantuITai campaign, there was a need to supplement it with funding. To this end, **2 roadmaps were created**, one aimed at the **elimination of open defecation**, and the other focused on the **provision of safely managed services**, with detailed intervention strategies to accelerate access to safely managed sanitation
- ▶ The roadmaps articulated **clear targets**, which have **fed into the medium and long term development plans of the national government, facilitating access to funding**. Achievement is currently at 10%, with a target to achieve 30% by 2030

Spotlighting Nepal

The government is cognizant of the challenges in the sector, and is keen to look for solutions. They conducted **the Joint Sector Review last year, where sanitation was a key issue that was discussed**. There is also a **Sector Development Plan and a sanitation mission** that is being launched in July 2024. At the local government level, they are working towards **creating WSH Acts, Plans and Units, coupled with advocacy and campaigns** to accelerate sanitation outcomes

Challenges

Challenges Across the Value Chain

- ▶ Access- there was open defecation across the town, with a high dependency on community toilets
- ▶ Collection- most toilets were connected to septic tanks, but these were oversized and only a few had access covers
- ▶ Conveyance- the septic tanks were not regularly desludged, and users were charged an emergency fee for emptying services when needed
- ▶ Treatment- there were no treatment facilities for the collected faecal sludge
- ▶ Disposal/Reuse- the faecal sludge was disposed at a dumping site without treatment, resulting in deterioration of ground and river water quality

Initiatives Undertaken

The Wai Journey: An example from India

- ▶ As a primary initiative, **government ownership was built, through the creation of a resolution** covering aspects such as town-wide FSSM, involving the private sector, scheduled desludging, provision of land for treatment facilities and taxes to be levied
- ▶ As a starting point, the city **adopted scheduled desludging**, moving from a consumer complain redressal system to a scheduled service, **which users pay for as part of their property tax**. This service was **institutionalized by ensuring that it is provided by the local government** to ensure sustainability
- ▶ This service is therefore **equitable and inclusive** in nature, providing all households with the same service, at a lower price. It has **caused behaviour change**, with an increase in toilet usage, prevented manual emptying, infrastructure optimization, with ideal use of the FSTP, along with larger environmental benefits
- ▶ To operationalize this, the city follows an **innovative financing model through the Performance Linked Annuity Model (PLAM)**, where the private sector has a contract with the local government to provide the service, with a set annual target. The service provider has to provide the service, and take the septage to the treatment facility, and collect signatures at both locations for proof. The households are paying a small sanitation tax as part of their annual property tax system, so there is no payment made at the time of service provision. The local government has created an escrow mechanism through which it pays the private operator, providing surety of funds
- ▶ Through this model, in 2022, Wai completed its first cycle where all septic tanks were desludged, which was **monitored through an online platform**
- ▶ Through these efforts, **ground and river water quality has improved, and greenhouse gas emissions have reduced**. Further, the FSTP is solar powered, and all **treated septage is re-used on site at an urban forest**, which is managed by an SHG
- ▶ Seeing the impact of these efforts, the **model has been scaled up** at both the state and national level



Conclusion

With safe and inclusive sanitation as a priority of several stakeholders across the region, various initiatives have been undertaken to enhance the situation on ground. These initiatives, along with several others will be further explored at the World Water Forum, to ensure that we can collectively improve and achieve the SDG 6.2 outcomes in South Asia.



Annexure

Speaker Profiles



Ms. Mariet Verhoef-Cohen

Ms. Mariet has served as the President of Women for Water Partnership (WfWP) since 2014. In her capacity as president, she has garnered global attention for the 'clean water for women' initiative, alongside advocating for gender-responsive sanitation solutions. Ms. Mariet has played a pivotal role in expanding the WfWP international network, which is dedicated to ensuring women's access to safe drinking water. Presently, the WfWP comprises 27 women's organizations spanning across 100 countries in South America, the Caribbean, Africa, Asia, and Europe.



Mr. Jeevan Thondaman

Mr. Jeevan is the Cabinet Minister for Water Supply and Estate Infrastructure Development, and a Member of Parliament in Sri Lanka. In 2023, at 28 years old, he became the youngest Cabinet Minister in Sri Lankan history. He is also the General Secretary of the Ceylon Workers Congress, one of the oldest trade unions and political parties in Sri Lanka, that works towards the upliftment of historically marginalized plantation worker communities. As the Minister for Water Supply, Mr. Jeevan has been spearheading ambitious reforms in the water sector, aiming to increase access to safe and affordable drinking water, create a climate resilience roadmap for water services and a transparent pricing formula that protects the most vulnerable. He continues to advocate for the rights of all marginalized people in Sri Lanka, especially workers, women, ethnic minorities and the LGBT+ community.



Ms. Seema Rajouria

Ms. Seema is the Head of Policy and Advocacy at WaterAid Nepal since November 2021, and has a background in communications and governance. She is enthusiastic about gender equality and social inclusion, and strongly believes that this should be the backbone for any development work to succeed. She believes in good governance and has experience in applied Policy Advocacy at the federal and subnational level to help build capable, efficient, transparent, accountable and inclusive institutions.



Ms. Kusum Athukorala

Ms. Kusum has worked across rural development, Integrated Water Resources Management, gender and water, and has established and grown an array of national and international organizations related to sustainable water management and climate change, such as the Global Water Partnership (GWP), SaciWATERs, WfWP and NetWwater, and is currently Regional Chair GWP South Asia Regional Water Partnership. In the run up to World Water Forum 10 in May 2024 in Bali, Ms. Kusum has organized a global consultative process "Signposts to Bali - the Voice of the Unheard". This focuses on engaging with women and youth through webinars and onsite hybrid meetings. The process will produce a draft document to be discussed at the Forum, and then link with the UN Call for Action and Agenda 2030.



Ms. Irma Setiono

Ms. Irma is a Senior Water Supply and Sanitation Specialist at the World Bank with more than 25 years of experience working in the water sector in Indonesia. Since joining the World Bank in 2009, she has worked on urban water supply and sanitation infrastructure development, rural and community-based water supply and sanitation, utility reforms, and sector financing. In Indonesia, she is the focal point for water and sanitation dialogue with Government and development partners on policy dialogue, strategy and business development, knowledge sharing, collaboration and coordination.



Mr. Kannan Nadar

Mr. Kannan is the Chief of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WSH) program in the UNICEF Indonesia Country Office. He brings over 27 years' experience in the developmental and humanitarian contexts across urban and rural environments spanning Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. He has led and managed large teams across complex environments, including high level policy and strategic engagements with Governments; supporting SDG-6 plans and national roadmaps on WSH; scale-up of community approaches including expansion of social services; innovation solutions; strengthening governance and accountability and promoting humanitarian-development-peace nexus.

Annexure

Speaker Profiles



Ms. Meghna Malhotra

Ms. Meghna is the Deputy Director of the Urban Management Centre (UMC). She is an expert on the design and operation of human centric infrastructure, and is leading UMC's partnership with the Government of Odisha to implement the Garima Scheme and the Government of India's NAMASTE Scheme which ensure safety and dignity of sanitation workers. Ms. Meghna has facilitated an emphasis on convergence between DAY-NULM, Swachh Bharat Mission and other flagship missions, and has held that the key to good governance lies in the creation of participatory processes within the urban local body (ULB), as well as the between the ULB and the communities that they serve.



Mr. Bipin Dangol

Mr. Bipin Dangol is a Senior Sanitation Expert at IsDB with 24 years of experience in project development, research, planning, and organizational development. His role at IsDB involves providing technical expertise in project preparation, appraisal, and implementation, capacity building, policy and sector reform, institutional development, and knowledge dissemination. He plays a crucial role in facilitating collaboration between IsDB and The Gates Foundation to advance work in City-Wide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS), focusing on fecal sludge management and non-networked sanitation solutions, as well as promoting the adoption of innovative sanitation technologies.



Mr. Aasim Mansuri

Mr. Aasim is a Senior Program Lead, and has been associated with the Centre for Water and Sanitation (CWAS) since 2010. He has extensive experience in the WASH sector in India, Nepal and Africa and has worked with governments and sector partners at all levels for planning and implementation of WASH programmes. He leads CWAS's work in supporting implementation of climate resilient and sensitive water and sanitation programs in small and medium towns of Gujarat and Maharashtra with a focus on Water Security, CWIS and Faecal Sludge and Septage Management. He is also a member of the National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (NFSSM) Alliance that works towards building an enabling environment to scale inclusive sanitation in India.



Ms. Lubna Karim

Ms. Lubna is currently pursuing her Bachelor's degree in English Literature at Abdul Wali Khan University in Mardan. Alongside her academic pursuits, she is actively involved as a water, sanitation and hygiene activist within the Mardan district. She takes pride in being a dedicated member of the sanitation women led CSOs network team, and is a member of the provincial youth assembly.



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TWO DECADES OF CONNECTING
WATER, ECOSYSTEMS AND COMMUNITIES

