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## Behaviour change communication approaches for FSM

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FUTURE CHALLENGES IN A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD

### Behaviour change communication approaches for FSM

K. Wankhade, N. Abhilaasha, N. Chakraborti & S. Priscilla

*India*

REFERENCE NO. 3197

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#### Summary

Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) is an important emerging area of work and the related solutions are gradually gaining traction with various state governments in India. However, the sustainability of such efforts requires Behaviour Change and Communication (BCC) to create a supportive environment and establish ownership towards safe sanitation among all stakeholders. In an effort to promote a positive behaviour change towards sanitation, the Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) attempted to give a human face to sanitation by creating *Kakkaman* (meaning Shit-Man), the state's own sanitation mascot. A BCC campaign centred on the fun and friendly 'Kakkaman' has been developed to take key messages on FSM and the full cycle of sanitation (FCS) to the people of the state.

#### Background

The GoTN aims to effect improvements along the urban sanitation chain and scale Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) across 663 towns in the state. In addition to improving sanitation through co-treatment at Sewage Treatment Plants (STPs) and establishing designated Fecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs), the Tamil Nadu Urban Sanitation Support Programme (TNUSSP) has strived for a strong buy-in for FSM from a range of stakeholders thus creating an enabling environment.

While the establishment of necessary infrastructure is an important first step, their effective utilisation depends on the uptake by a range of stakeholders along the FCS. Primary and secondary research indicated the prevalent taboo and stigma around sanitation. There was a need to bring 'sanitation out of the closet' and make it an everyday topic. There was also a need to make consumers as well as Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) embrace FSM with an increased sense of ownership. Hence, it was envisaged to make sanitation a 'fun, positive and aspirational' topic through a relatable character – a mascot for FSM in Tamil Nadu.

#### The campaign

TNUSSP developed a state-wide campaign featuring 'Kakkaman' to take key messages across the various components of FCS to a lay audience, positioning them in two phases. The first set of messages were broad, introducing the concept of sanitation and FCS, urging people to think beyond 'toilets'. The second set of messages were designed to inform the people of Tamil Nadu about the upcoming treatment facilities near them, the importance of their functioning and usage, including a joint call to action to take part in the Kakkaman campaign.

Starting from 2017, the Kakkaman has been pre-tested in Coimbatore and Trichy districts to get public feedback and response. The mascot was well received amongst the pre-tested audience owing to the lively and interactive methods adopted, which engaged citizens to actively 'speak' about sanitation and take up the 'call to action' towards safe sanitation. However, operational constraints hindered a state-wide launch.

In 2020, the campaign gathered momentum again and a communication package was developed for a state-wide as well as a city-wide roll out. The media and outreach plan for the campaign included Above the Line and Below the Line modes. A package with an interesting musical film which has 'Kakkaman' explaining the full cycle of sanitation, and jingles and posters were developed. The campaign was piloted in Trichy in February 2021, and a state-wide roll out is anticipated later in 2021.

### **Early learnings / way forward**

'Kakkaman', designed to be the friendly face of the BCC campaign aims to bring alive sanitation as an aspirational topic into the public mind, and link it to quality of life which is a necessary precursor to behaviour change. The larger objective of the campaign is to increase the sense of ownership among individual consumers and households and create a sense of responsibility towards the larger sanitation outcomes in their homes, neighbourhoods, city, district, and eventually the state. Challenges such as gaining traction from the Urban Local Bodies can be overcome with sustained engagement with stakeholders to build partnerships at the state and local level, which should be leveraged for campaign implementation and better reach of messages. Currently, the campaign is being monitored and the impact remains to be measured.

### **References**

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### **Contact details**

Kavita currently leads the water and sanitation portfolio at IIHS. Trained in architecture, urban design, and social sciences, Kavita's work primarily revolves around urban service delivery and the interface between physical infrastructure and socio-economic dynamics.

**Kavita Wankhade:** Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) Chennai. Floor 7A,  
Chaitanya Exotica, 24/51 Venkatnarayana Road, T Nagar, Chennai 600 017,  
India. Telephone: +91 44 6630 5500. Website: <http://tnussp.co.in/>  
Email: [kwankhade@iihs.co.in](mailto:kwankhade@iihs.co.in)

**N Abhilaasha:** Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) Chennai. Floor 7A,  
Chaitanya Exotica, 24/51 Venkatnarayana Road, T Nagar, Chennai 600 017,  
India. Telephone: +91 44 6630 5500. Website: <http://tnussp.co.in/>  
Email: [abhilaashan@iihs.co.in](mailto:abhilaashan@iihs.co.in)