



## Post event Report- S.W.A.S.H (Save Water and Save Humanity)

“Water and Sanitation- Ensuring quality, availability and accessibility”

20 March 2015, TERI University

### Context

Millions of people in our country are exposed to risk due to lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Basic facilities like water and sanitation services are not only vital to human health but also have other important benefits – some of which are easily identifiable and quantifiable in terms of cost and time while others provide intangible benefits like convenience, well-being, dignity, privacy and safety.

Coca-Cola Department of Regional Water Studies, TERI University celebrated its annual event S.W.A.S.H (Save Water and Save Humanity) on 20 March 2015. The theme of the event was “*Water and Sanitation- ensuring quality, availability and accessibility*”. This theme was chosen because it is not only in line with Prime Minister’s Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) but is also one of the priority areas of concern in India. The objective of this one day event was to motivate the youth to creatively participate in debates, deliberations and competitions to highlight the problem and come up with innovative ideas on the issues related to water and sanitation.

The TERI University has always endeavoured to engage in problem solving process related to environment and natural resource management. At present, it is leading a USAID funded project titled “**Strengthening Water and Sanitation in Urban Settings**” focusing on capacity-building at various levels across India. The project also includes behavioural analysis and interventions in cities of Chennai and Kolkata.

## The Event

The event was inaugurated by Ms. Kathryn Stevens, Deputy Mission Director, USAID, Ms. Neelima Khetan, CSR and Sustainability Head, Coca-Cola India and South West Asia, Dr. Leena Srivastava, Acting Director General, TERI, Dr. Rajiv Seth, Acting Vice Chancellor, TERI University



and Prof. Arun Kansal, Head of the Department, Coca-Cola Department of Regional Water Studies. Ms. Kathryn Stevens emphasized on the need to address the problem of water and sanitation in India and enumerated ways in which USAID had been partnering with different organisations to alleviate the issue. She also launched the USAID-TERI University- Coca-Cola, Urban WASH Alliance project website. This



website has been designed to provide a dynamic interface with the public and keep them engaged. The website provides all information related to project objectives, its various activities and the past and the upcoming events. The address of the website is [www.teriuniversity.ac.in/WASH/](http://www.teriuniversity.ac.in/WASH/). Ideas, suggestions and feedback for

improvement can be mailed and the progress on the work can be viewed by visiting this website. The other esteemed members also spoke on water and sanitation challenges, the magnanimity of which is highly underestimated. They encouraged the participants to think differently and be a part of change they wish to see.

## Student Activities

The inaugural session was followed by a series of competitions related to the theme of S.W.A.S.H. The event drew a good response from the youth and over 60 students took part in various competitions. While panel discussion gave ten teams an opportunity to discuss, deliberate and come up with innovative ideas to improve water and



sanitation in public places; whereas poster, picture, multimedia and poetry gave youth a chance to creatively represent the problem and influence the thoughts of public. The winning entries under each segment have been uploaded on University's official Facebook page to acknowledge the contribution of youth and

extend our appreciation and motivate them to link the problem solving process in large numbers.

Some of the suggestions that emerged from this event were:

1. Collaborative approach to managing waste water and providing access to sanitation.
2. Practice water harvesting irrespective of resident type- independent bungalow or apartment or hut.
3. Maintain a safe distance between water resource and toilets and waste disposal and treatment plants.
4. Create awareness and behavioral change by collaborating with schools and media houses.
5. Combine traditional knowledge with latest technologies for managing water and sanitation.
6. Public Private Partnership (PPP) along with fast-track allocation of funds by the government to Municipal Corporations.

7. Organizations to take up these issues on priority under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.
8. Building community toilets through private sector partnership.
9. Enhancing resource utility and reducing resource wastage through adequate training and use of technology.
10. Providing subsidy and incentive for building structures that would help in conserving water and improving sanitation.