



TNUSSP IN 2022

Since 2016, the IIHS-led Tamil Nadu Urban Sanitation Support Programme (TNUSSP) has supported the Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) in its pioneering endeavour to ensure safe and sustainable sanitation for all. TNUSSP has focused on scaling inclusive Fecal Sludge Management across all the urban local bodies (ULBs) in the state. These measurable impacts have propelled the state towards achieving sustainable and inclusive development.

In 2022, TNUSSP took its learning beyond Tamil Nadu – to other states and countries – through exposure visits, advisory support, consultations, and conferences. Through our unique experiences, we hope to contribute to shaping the sanitation trajectory in India and globally. Here's a glimpse of our work in 2022.

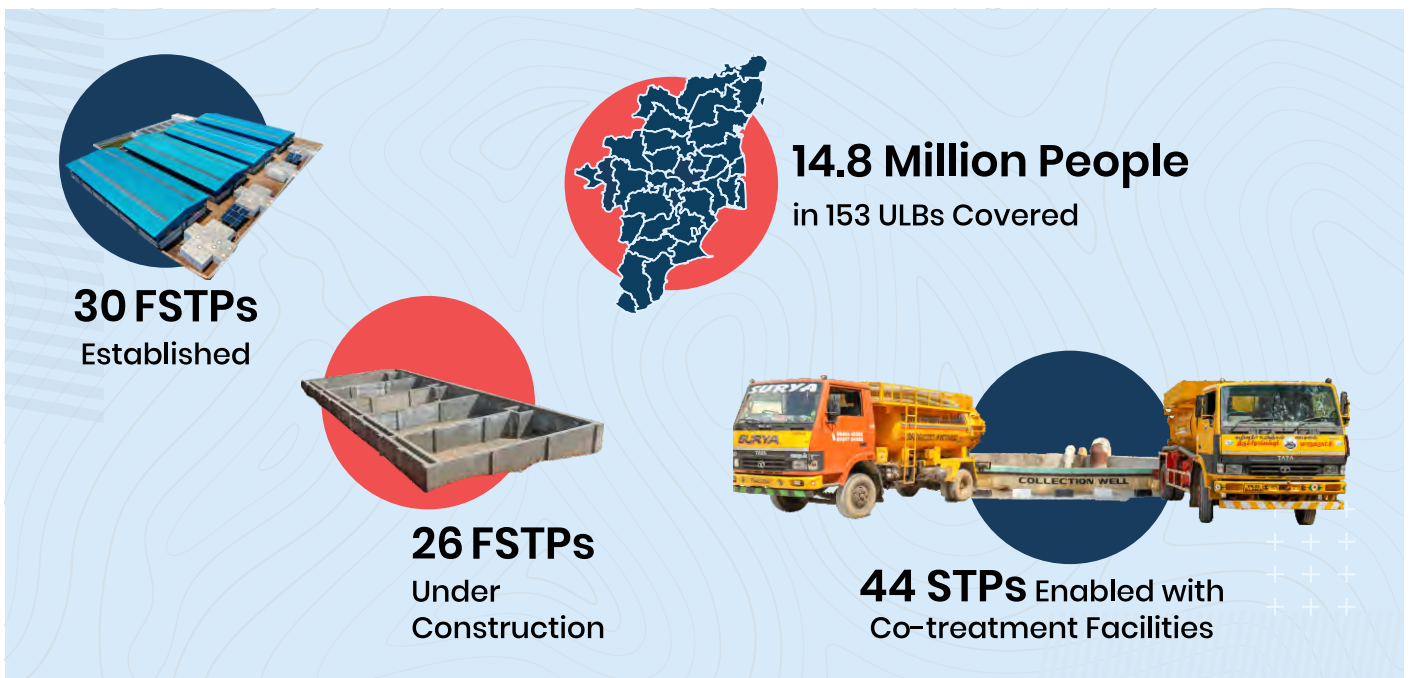
SCALING FECAL SLUDGE MANAGEMENT IN TAMIL NADU

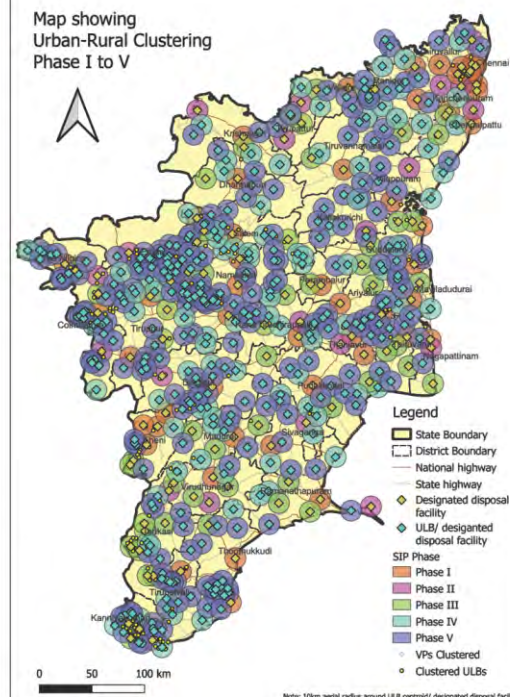
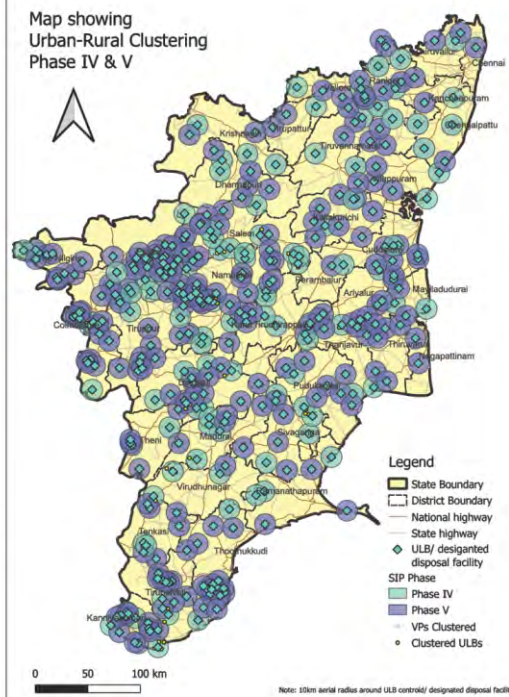
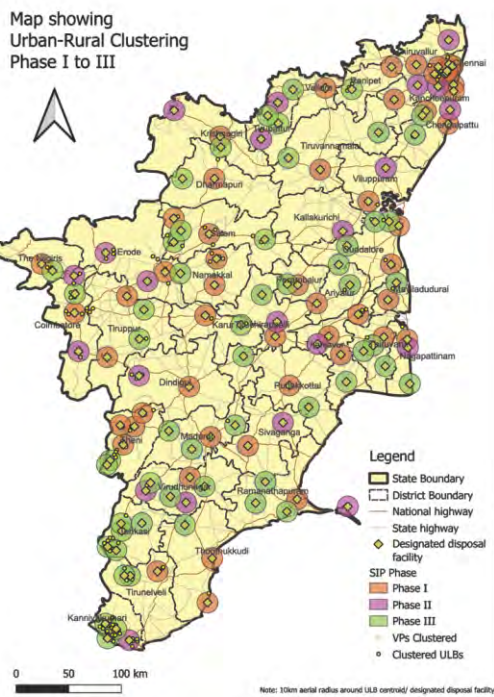
We continued to scale up our work in Tamil Nadu by supporting the GoTN in capacity expansion and creating policy and governance frameworks. Benefitting 15 million users in over 150 towns and cities across the state, this is one of the largest SDG-6 implementation programmes in the world.



Achieving universal coverage

On the ground, we supported the GoTN in scaling up fecal sludge management across the state to cover nearly 15 million people spread across 153 Urban Local Bodies. Work is afoot to cover another 1.7 million people in 65 ULBs.





Achieving optimal utilisation

To cover those beyond the reach of these sanitation systems, TNUSSP introduced a unique concept called Clustering, wherein ULBs within a radius of 10km of an existing or proposed treatment facility are grouped into clusters that share and use the facility. Sharing the facilities and funds for their operation and maintenance are made possible through Memorandums of Understanding (MoU) between the host ULBs and others in the cluster.

Earlier this year, the GoTN initiated an urban-rural mapping exercise to create the clusters. So far, 50 clusters have been created through 25 MoUs. The learnings from this experience were shared at the strategic workshop for SBM-U 2.0 organised by MoHUA.



Institutionalising Fecal Sludge Management

Even as we widen access to sanitation systems, we are working to improve adherence to safe sanitation norms by various stakeholders. TNUSSP supported the GoTN in revising the operative guidelines for septage management. The GoTN is also in the process of introducing a chapter on regulating FSM in relevant Acts through amendments to eliminate unsafe disposal of untreated waste.

ENABLING SANITATION WORKERS AND THE URBAN POOR

Our engagement with sanitation workers and the urban poor increased in 2022 as we introduced new campaigns and took forward existing ones.



A platform for sanitation workers to speak

“My monthly salary is ₹4,000. I run my house with that. I have never resorted to begging. I work hard and earn an honest living. God has given transgender persons like me the same faculties as any man or woman.”



Sanjana Lavera - Toilet Cleaner,
Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, Maharashtra

Through #WeSpeakToo, we built a platform for sanitation workers to speak up about their work, challenges, and aspirations. This series of multi-city seminars began in April 2022 and was conducted in Bengaluru, Mumbai and Dehradun. Around 15 workers, engaged in various activities within the sector, spoke about how cities and people treat them and what they want for their future. We aspire to build a dialogue on the living conditions of sanitation workers through the seminar series, which will continue this year. The series is being organised in association with the Alliance of Indian Wastepickers.

[Click here to watch the sessions online](#)



Highlighting the role of women in sanitation

The third edition of the #WomenInSanitation campaign was conducted in 2022. In line with the year's International Women's Day theme – 'Break the Bias,' the campaign revolved around the stories of women professionals in the sanitation sector. The value women sanitation workers and professionals bring to the sector must be celebrated. The Women in Sanitation campaign aims to do just that, and in the process, generate much-needed conversations.

[Click here to watch the series](#)



Sarivazhagi – Supervisor,
Karumandapan Micro composting Centre, Tamil Nadu

“If women undertake a job, it will be completed. We are able to run a micro composting centre on our own. But in a male-dominated setup, becoming a female supervisor is not easy. I reached here because I wanted to show the people that I can do it. I will keep achieving more.”



While most sanitation programmes integrate gender, they often put women in the centre of sanitation planning mostly as users, participants, or beneficiaries. Though few in number, women professionals in the sanitation sector are making a difference. TNUSSP’s Kavita Wankhade gave a TEDx talk on Women in Sanitation and the need to recognise women professionals in the sector.

[Click here to watch the video](#)



Enhancing occupational safety of sanitation workers

To enhance the occupational health and safety of sanitation workers, TNUSSP conducted a needs assessment, which identified the lack of safe de-sludging tools, PPE kits, and knowledge to handle emergencies as safety issues. As an initial step towards addressing these issues, we developed a First Aid Training Manual for De-Sludging Operators in association with the Indian Red Cross Society and St. John Ambulance Association. Orientation sessions were conducted to train DSOs on using the manual.



~ 800+ Informal Sanitation Workers

Received Occupational Identity Cards Affiliated with Labour Department and TAHDCO



2,102 Sanitation Workers and their Family Members

Benefitted from 18 Health Camps



1,732 Sanitation Workers

Linked with Various Social Security Schemes

TAKING OUR LEARNING TO THE WORLD

For TNUSSP, 2022 was an action-packed year. Even as we scaled up our work in Tamil Nadu, we also took our expertise and experiences beyond the borders of the state.



The 2022 Water and Health Conference, University of North Carolina, USA

In October, we were a part of the 2022 Water and Health Conference, organised by The Water Institute, University of North Carolina (UNC). TNUSSP co-hosted three side events – with the World Bank, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and OVERDUE. We spoke about our experiences in scaling up urban sanitation in Tamil Nadu, valuing the role of women in sanitation, and decoding sanitation workers’ safety. You can watch the sessions here:

[Scaling Urban Sanitation in Tamil Nadu, India: Key Lessons and Challenges](#)

[The Invisible Workforce: How to Value Women’s Role in Sanitation?](#)

[Decoding Workers’ Safety in Urban Sanitation: Lessons from Research and Practice](#)



Knowledge sharing with WEDC, UK and OVERDUE

The Water Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC), at Loughborough University, UK, hosted TNUSSP's Kavita Wankhade in May 2022, where she explained our work in India and shared our reflections on urban practice. Kavita also addressed a session at OVERDUE Just Sanitation's UK office, attended by the organisation's partners from Africa and students, where the conversation centred on the role of gender in sanitation.



Government of India's Strategic Workshop for Effective Implementation of SBM-U 2.0

We shared our learnings from Tamil Nadu at the 'Strategic Workshop for Effective Implementation of SBM-U 2.0', held in Karnataka. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), GoI, and the Directorate of Municipal Administration, Karnataka, organised the workshop. TNUSSP's Kavita Wankhade and Santhosh Ragavan shared details of the strategic approaches tried and tested by TNUSSP.



Exposure visits for global WASH practitioners

We started exposure visits for global WASH practitioners in 2022. Several experts from other states and countries visited our projects in Trichy and Chennai to learn about our work and and enriched the sessions by sharing their experiences.

- In September, delegates from Bangladesh, including the Mayor of Faridpur municipality, Amitav Bose, visited our Trichy project sites. The delegation was led by staff from the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad.
- In December, a delegation of government officers from Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Uttarakhand — led by the National Institute for Urban Affairs (NIUA) — arrived on a learning visit.
- In December, Eva Muhia, a sanitation professional from Kenya, visited our project locations in Chennai and Trichy. She talked about her work in Kenya with the Pan-African Association of Sanitation Actors (PASA) and shared her observations about the sector in the continent.

INCLUSIVE SANITATION IN CITIES

Urban agglomerations face some of the biggest challenges in sanitation. Here's how we are helping cities in Tamil Nadu crack those puzzles:



TRICHY

The City-Wide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) team is working closely with the Trichy City Corporation to improve overall sanitation outcomes across the full cycle of sanitation and service delivery to the poor, while ensuring the safety and welfare of sanitation workers. As part of an initiative to deter unsafe disposal, a web-based record-keeping application was introduced to replace manual records at decanting stations.

CWIS has refurbished over 200 CT/PTs with the support of CSR initiatives. A scheduler application was also developed to schedule and track the desludging frequency in CTs to render uninterrupted quality service. Around 150 CT/PTs with onsite sanitation systems were studied to understand the number of users and load generation. The application has been piloted in 99 CT/PTs.



**58 SHGS FORMED BY
MOBLISING 607 INFORMAL
SANITATION WORKERS,
AND LINKED WITH NULM**



**23 YOUTH CLUBS
COMPRISING 270
MEMBERS FORMED**



**~160 SANITATION
WORKERS SUPPORTED
FOR ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT**



**~580+ SANITATION
WORKERS TRAINED
UNDER NULM**



**~320+ PROVIDED
ALTERNATIVE SKILLS
TRAINING**



**~ 800+
INFORMAL SANITATION
WORKERS RECEIVED
OCCUPATIONAL IDENTITY
CARDS AFFILIATED WITH
LABOUR DEPARTMENT
AND TAHDCO**



**AS MANY AS 1,732
SANITATION WORKERS
WERE LINKED WITH
VARIOUS SOCIAL
SECURITY SCHEMES**



COIMBATORE

TNUSSP facilitated a Memorandum of Understanding between KR Hospital, near Coimbatore, and four town panchayats. Now, more than 800 sanitation workers and their families residing in Periyanaickenpalayam, Narasimhanaickenpalayam, Veerapandi, and Idigarai have access to free medical camps twice a year.



CHENNAI

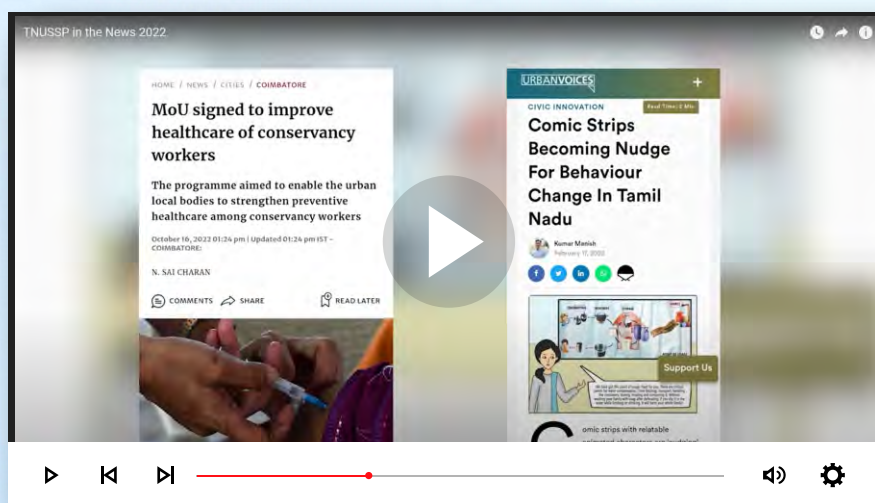


TNUSSP is working with the Greater Chennai Corporation in conducting a pilot study of Operation and Maintenance (O&M) models for CT/PTs. In June 2022, TNUSSP renovated nine CT/PTs across the city and handed over the maintenance to women’s self-help groups, community-based organisations, and small private enterprises, which work under TNUSSP’s guidance. Over the past several months, usage has increased significantly, and the toilets have attracted the attention of policymakers, politicians, and the public.

The Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) has been working with the HCL Foundation since September 2022 to study the sanitation situation in slums across Chennai. This project focuses on understanding the local sanitation conditions of different typologies of slums in the city. Based on the findings from the study, IIHS will develop a set of strategic interventions for implementation, and identify institutional actors to enable the sustainability of outcomes.

TNUSSP IN THE NEWS

Our work in 2022 received widespread media attention. Take a look:



ABOUT US



The Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS) is a national education, research, practice and capacity development institution committed to the equitable, sustainable and efficient transformation of Indian cities and settlements.

A proposed Institution of Eminence (IOE), IIHS aims to transform the current nature of urban education as one of the most important drivers for India's national development and sustainable global futures. Its interdisciplinary approach to research and practice helps build new global knowledge and train urban professionals.

Since 2016, the Tamil Nadu Urban Sanitation Support Programme, a consortium led by the Indian Institute for Human Settlements, has been proactively supporting the Government of Tamil Nadu in making improvements along the entire urban sanitation chain in cities. We work towards strengthening septage management as an economical and sustainable complement to network-based sewerage systems and aim to scale Fecal Sludge Management (FSM) across 649 towns in the state, covering a total urban population of 30 million.

Visit our [website](#) to know more about our work.

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