

Piramal Sarvajal and Center for Water and Sanitation Launch Composite Water Vulnerability Index Tool

- Increasing Water Security for the Urban Under-Served -

- Pilot study with CWVI (Composite Water Vulnerability Index) tool designed for ranking of slums
 - Study showed that 30% households are Beyond the Pipe (BtP)
 - Direct correlation between improved water and sanitation and reduction in incidence of water borne disease and improved immunity
- The tool and the study was launched on the sidelines of a Webinar on ‘Sustainable Water Security for Urban Under-Served’

Mumbai | November 25, 2020: Piramal Sarvajal, the safe drinking water initiative of Piramal Foundation launched a tool named Composite Water Vulnerability Index (CWVI) at its recent Webinar on ‘Sustainable Water Security for Urban Under-Served’ hosted in association with Center for Water and Sanitation (CWAS) and Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT). The CWVI tool is designed to rank slums on various parameters such as Availability, Accessibility, Reliability, Quality and Burden of Disease. This tool designed by Piramal Sarvajal in partnership with CWAS was demonstrated through a Pilot study in 23 slums of Nagpur, in alliance with the Nagpur Municipal Corporation (NMC), that has led the way in smart-city thinking.

As opined and agreed by the panelists during the Webinar, this tool could be replicated in ten smart cities in Maharashtra and then scaled-up and administered across various smart cities in India. The CWVI tool will go a long way in defining and identifying highly vulnerable communities and their specific areas of challenge. This will further help governing bodies to take a more robust approach to resolve the current problem of provision of reliable and safe drinking water to urban beyond-the-pipe communities. Leveraging technology and innovation along with cloud computing, digital finance and development finance will better equip the country to resolve water management problems. These solutions will also lead to women empowerment by mobilizing them towards community engagement in water.

The speakers at the Webinar on ‘Sustainable Water Security for Urban Under-Served’ included Dr. Swati Piramal, Vice-Chairperson, Piramal Group and Director, Piramal Foundation; Shri Mahesh Pathak, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra; Hitesh Vaidya, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA); Dr. K. Viswanath, Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Director, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health - India Research Center; Dr. Meera Mehta Director, CWAS, CEPT and Anuj Sharma, CEO, Piramal Sarvajal. The webinar was moderated by Prof Dinesh Mehta, CWAS, CEPT University.

As a part of her Keynote Address at the Webinar, Dr. Swati Piramal, Vice-Chairperson, Piramal Group and Director Piramal Foundation, said, “Over the past years, India has made great strides in providing access to improved water sources. To truly achieve our SDG targets, it is imperative for us to focus on ensuring safely managed water and strengthen water security, especially for the urban under-served communities. At Piramal Foundation, we collaborate with like-minded partners as we remain committed in our endeavor to provide access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.”

Shri Mahesh Pathak, Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department, Government of Maharashtra appreciated the sterling work by Piramal Foundation and CEPT. He underlined the

importance of better water management especially waste-water recycling and reuse. He mentioned that the state government has a policy for waste-water recycling and reuse and many cities – Mumbai, Pune, Nagpur have been practicing it. This can reduce dependence on fresh-water resources and help improve water security. He suggested that organisations like CEPT and Piramal Foundation can support cities in Maharashtra. This is an opportune moment for such activities as under AMRUT 2.0, that will soon be launched, improving water services will be a key.

Dr. Meera Mehta, Director C-WAS reiterated that access to safe and affordable water is a key to ensure achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 – Clean Water and Sanitation for all. She said that SDG 6.1 also focuses on the universal, equitable and affordable access. She emphasized the need to ensure good quality water for the poor, as well as in schools and health facilities. Role of women and self-help groups in these activities were also underlined.

Dr. K. Viswanath, Lee Kum Kee Professor of Health Communication, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Director, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health - India Research Center spoke about how water will be a significant problem leading to all kinds of conflict. He congratulated Piramal Sarvajal on developing an innovative and powerful tool like the Composite Water Vulnerability Index (CWVI) that has the potential to change behavior, especially essential in the post-Covid world. Speaking specifically on the utility of the CWVI for urban planners, he said, “A tool like this can easily capture in an understandable way, the status of health in these communities. Not only does it allow communities to track their progress over a period of time, but also compare themselves to other communities”.

Anuj Sharma, CEO, Piramal Sarvajal commented, “This pilot study conducted in Nagpur brings the macro-level challenge to a defined city-level challenge that can be addressed with specific solutions and targeted impact. We hope that the study will serve as an inspiration for other Civic Bodies to conduct their own assessment, especially for those living in slums, explore the viability of off-grid solutions and determine the willingness to pay for such solutions. At Piramal Sarvajal, we believe that using tools such as the CWVI provides the right impetus to action and believe that this will be adopted widely across India.”

Hitesh Vaidya, Director, National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA), spoke about the increasing levels of urbanization, challenges of providing equitable, reliable and safe drinking water to all, and the need for researched data for better governance of water supply services by Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

This Webinar on ‘Sustainable Water Security for Urban Under-Served’ was attended by dignitaries from the Government, Academia, Civil Society Organizations, NGOs and community at large. The discussions highlighted sustainable water security options for the urban under-served and the possibility of scaling up CWVI for ranking of slums by other ULBs of Maharashtra and other states. A complementary mix of pipe and off-grid services was highlighted for urban water security amongst other urban water service level benchmarks.

About Piramal Foundation:

Piramal Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Piramal Group, a global business conglomerate with diverse interests in Pharma, Financial Services, Real Estate and Glass Packaging, is a Section 8 Company that develops innovative solutions to resolve issues that are critical roadblocks towards unlocking India’s economic potential. Its sustainable development programmes in primary healthcare & nutrition, education leadership & women empowerment, and access to safe drinking water across 25 Indian states, largely in partnership with the central and state governments have impacted over 112 Million lives till date.

For more information, visit: <https://www.piramalfoundation.org/>, [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

About Piramal Sarvajal:

Piramal Sarvajal is a mission-driven social enterprise which believes that pure drinking water should be accessible and affordable for everyone. Towards this end, it has designed and deployed innovative solutions for creating affordable access to safe drinking water in underserved areas. Piramal Sarvajal is at the forefront of developing technologies and business practices in the safe drinking water sector that are designed to make a purely market-based model sustainable in both rural and urban deployment conditions. It serves 7.25+ lac people daily, through 1800+ touch points across 20 states in India.

About CWAS

The Center for Water and Sanitation (CWAS), at the CEPT Research and Development Foundation, undertakes active research, implementation support and capacity building initiatives in the field of urban water and sanitation. Acting as a thought catalyst and facilitator, CWAS works closely with city and state governments to support them in delivering water and sanitation services in an efficient, effective and equitable manner.

The Center was established in 2009 with a pioneering project of Performance Assessment System (PAS) of water and sanitation service delivery in Indian cities. PAS has grown to cover 1000 cities across 6 states and Smart Cities, enabling informed policy decisions and actions for improvement. Recent work of CWAS includes supporting the Govt. of Maharashtra in implementing the Swachh Bharat Mission. This also entails support to city governments to attain and maintain 'open defecation free' status and move beyond toilets to address entire sanitation service chain including safe management of waste-water.

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