

Searchlight

SOUTH ASIA

TRACKING URBAN POVERTY TRENDS IN INDIA, BANGLADESH, NEPAL AND PAKISTAN

OCTOBER 2012 Vol. 4, Issue 1

Contents

FEATURE

Redefining CSR 1

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Livelihoods Challenge for Transgender Women. 5

CASE STUDY

Uncorking Bottled Light 9

NEWS DEEP DIVE

Power Policies in Pakistan. 13

REGIONAL NEWS SUMMARIES . . . 17

EVENTS 24

More *Searchlight South Asia* at
URBANPOVERTY.INTELLECAP.COM

Disclaimer The opinions expressed in *Searchlight South Asia* are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Rockefeller Foundation.



Flickr User Legercle

FEATURE

Redefining CSR

BY NISHA KUMAR KULKARNI

Over the last 40 years, 'corporate social responsibility' (CSR) has evolved. It is a term that generally implies safeguarding the interests of company stakeholders. Shining examples of [CSR leaders today](#) underline how a 'stakeholder' is more than just company investors, employees and customers, but also local communities and the environment. As the global business environment has become increasingly more integrated and complex, it is universally acknowledged that the influence of corporations extend beyond profit-making activities in the economy.

As it has gained popularity around the world, corporations have adopted CSR practices to improve their brand image both internally and externally through philanthropy, internal social strategy (i.e., Fair Trade products, recycling programs) and initiatives like sponsored community service days. Today, CSR has advanced further to demonstrate 'beyond profit' thinking and highlight a set of values and standards to aspire to.

CONTINUED INSIDE ▶

FEATURE continued**CSR IN INDIA**

Today, large corporations no longer see CSR as just a social statement; they recognize it as an important part of business growth and strategy. In a country like India, where 32.7% of the total population lives below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 per day, companies recognize vast potential to access a larger untapped market, which inevitably would also translate into making a positive social impact. Because India has a huge population, Myshkin Ingawale, founder and CEO of [Biosense Technologies](#), says: “By definition, the Indian market is for profit and for impact.”

CSR is a hot topic in India’s business world. The country has a rich tradition of CSR where, like in most countries around the world, such efforts began with philanthropy and today are defined by sustainable business strategy. Beyond the internal machinations of corporate India, public policy has also taken notice of CSR and its importance to the Indian economy. In 2010, the Government of India was deliberating over a proposal to make CSR mandatory for companies fitting one of the following [criteria](#): (1) an annual net worth of at least INR500 crore (~US\$94.35m); (2) an annual turnover of at least INR1,000 crore (~US\$188.7m); or (3) an annual net profit of at least INR5 crore (~US\$943,000). The proposed Companies Bill 2009 required that such companies allocate 2% of their average net profit of the preceding three years to CSR activities. The proposed law did not go through in 2010, but earlier

India has a rich tradition of CSR where, like in most countries around the world, such efforts began with philanthropy and today are defined by sustainable business strategy.

this month, the Indian Cabinet [approved](#) amendments to the Companies Bill 2011, which includes the 2% clause. If the new Companies Bill does pass, India will be the only country in the world to have legislated mandatory CSR activity.

Though the merits of CSR are clear, legislating it does pose some important concerns. In a [September 2012 article](#) in *The Hindu*, Mohit Kishore makes an important point on the subject of mandatory CSR in India. He writes: “...if a fixed percentage of profits were to be allocated by each firm towards CSR, it must be implemented in a manner that builds on the strengths that professionally-run companies already have, as opposed to tokenism.” There is legitimate concern about how effective a CSR requirement can be and whether companies will leverage their strengths to make positive impact, as opposed to just doing the bare minimum. Vivek Patwardhan, an independent human resources consultant and writer, asks this: “Will [CSR] be a responsibility or compliance then? Compliance is the bare minimum level...Make [it a] law and lower the standards of giving back to the society.”

Alongside these legitimate concerns are questions about how enforcing the 2% rule will be implemented and what the consequences would be for non-compliance. Without such well-defined measures in place, there is a large enough loophole for corruption.

BUSINESS AND THE URBAN POOR

Irrespective of politics, the move to integrate CSR into national business law is a clear signal from the government for companies to take a more pro-active role in communities. It may also be interpreted as an attempt by the government to formalize a relationship with an able-bodied partner – the private sector – to fill gaps its networks and resources are, for whatever reasons, unable to reach. If this latter point is the case, the government would have good reason to buy into this supposition. Corporate India’s

FEATURE continued

past record of CSR does demonstrate the scope for further evolution of Indian CSR, moving from pure business strategy to asserting economic development and welfare.

Because India has a predominantly rural population, it comes as no surprise that CSR initiatives have historically leaned in that direction. Certain issues, particularly [education](#), have attracted a high proportion of volunteerism and philanthropic giving. There has, however, been a slight paradigm shift in the 2000s, where large companies are starting to work with the urban poor to impact areas such as health and infrastructure.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies, has been present in India since 1924. The company has an active CSR practice that includes running a [primary healthcare center](#) (PHC) at Mumbai's largest garbage dump in Deonar, in collaboration with the [Niramaya Health Foundation](#). Starting in 2009, GSK decided to work with the young rag-picker population who are mostly neglected in the healthcare landscape. Rag-pickers are usually children, aged five to 14, who are exposed to hazardous waste (e.g. medical equipment, used needles, syringes) and are thus susceptible to injuries and respiratory or skin infections. The PHC provides healthcare and health-related education to rag-pickers and their families, reaching more than 15,000 people. GSK also works with the community to cultivate peer educators who conduct health workshops and programs.

If the 2% clause is written into law, there needs to be a systemic, seamless and holistic approach to CSR projects so that they complement rather than compete with each other.

In a very different project, French industrial company [Lafarge](#) has been working with UN-HABITAT to [renovate slum communities and build affordable homes](#). This commitment to building sustainable cities has required some out-of-the-box thinking: with the by-lanes of slums being narrow, it is not easy to transfer the necessary equipment and building materials to construction sites. Lafarge is working on ways to grapple with this challenge and support slum renovation efforts. The company is also teaching this mindset: it has launched the [Studio+](#) initiative, in partnership with Mumbai's Sir J.J. College of Architecture and [URBZ](#), to give students firsthand field experience in creating affordable housing.

There are also regional CSR trends associated with urbanization, particularly in areas with a high incidence of industry. On the outskirts of Pune, Pimpri-Chinchwad is home to international companies like Cummins, Forbes Marshall, Tata Motors and Volkswagen, amongst many others. Approximately 1.8 million people live in the area, and there is a large urban poor population. Because of local opportunity and needs, companies in the area have been interacting more with the community and focusing on issues they can help to alleviate. In [an April 2012 article](#) in *The Economic Times*, Rati Forbes, director of engineering firm Forbes Marshall, said: "It is important for companies to act as a catalyst to address the issues that communities face... A business cannot alienate itself from the community." Forbes Marshall has CSR initiatives in Pimpri-Chinchwad that address addiction, education, finance, healthcare, life skills, livelihoods training and violence.

BUILDING CITIES: AN AMBITIOUS SCOPE

Companies like Forbes Marshall are contributing to CSR trends affecting cityscapes, but the idea that CSR can help shape cities is not new in India. The city of [Jamshed-](#)

FEATURE continued

SOURCES

http://www.academia.edu/573578/CSR_Resettlement_and_urban_planning

<http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/india-philanthropy-report-2012.aspx>

http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report_in-companies-bill-csr-other-provisos-pain_1749047

http://articles.economicstimes.indiatimes.com/2012-04-17/news/31355350_1_csr-initiatives-csr-activities-women-empowerment

<http://www.gsk-india.com/corporate-urbanprojects.html>

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/features/weekend-life/article3893083.ece>

<http://www.thehindu.com/business/companies/article1452043.ece>

<http://indiagovernance.gov.in/files/JUSCO-FINAL.pdf>

<http://investinindia.com/news/cabinet-approves-amendments-companies-bill-2011>

http://www.moneycontrol.com/news/cnbc-tv18-comments/csr-norm-may-not-be-mandatorywill-have-conditions_764716.html

<http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/country/IND>

<http://profit.ndtv.com/news/corporates/article-csr-spending-to-be-made-mandatory-for-companies-311691>

<http://www.tata.com/company/Articles/inside.aspx?artid=JALTbu7Wr3k>

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/India-Inc-takes-CSR-route-to-expand-business/articleshow/16485050.cms>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolution_of_corporate_social_responsibility_in_India

pur, in Jharkhand state, is an ideal example. Founded by J.N. Tata – founder of the Tata Group – Jamshedpur was India's first planned industrial city. It is the third largest city in eastern India, after Kolkata and Patna, with over 1.33 million inhabitants. It has been called the seventh richest city in India, as well as the country's seventh cleanest city. It is also the only city in India without its own municipal corporation.

The city was born alongside the first Tata steel plant in 1908. For the plant's workers, Tata did not want to build makeshift huts, but an actual thriving, modern city. This was a groundbreaking concept in industrial India, but it has proven to be a valuable case study of how a corporate can exercise social responsibility in its best form. Today, the city is well-maintained with its "clean and smooth" roads, 24/7 access to electricity and water, and even a community hotline to field questions and concerns.

Being a successful hub of industry means that Jamshedpur does attract migrant workers who live in informal settlements around the city. The Jamshedpur Utilities and Services Company (JUSCO), a "one-stop utility service provider" (instead of a municipal corporation), does not overlook the urban poor, but makes efforts to incorporate them into city life. Most recently, JUSCO has worked on a project to **improve water supply** to the urban poor in slum communities.

Indian Hydel Power Company (IHPC) is another company that has been shaping cities. Since the 1970s, it has resettled more than 15,000 families after construction of a dam submerged a town. **IHPC's first resettlement colony** is in the state of Uttarakhand, 20 minutes from IHPC's headquarters, and it is a township like any other in India. It has schools, health centers and a shopping complex. There are still problems, however, that IHPC must resolve with the community, including access to potable water. Because IHPC has been present and actively engaged with the community for over 30 years, there are high expectations that the company will remain an authority able to resolve local problems.

In the cases of both Jamshedpur and the IHPC resettlement colony, cities have risen due to private enterprise. The absence of a democratically elected municipal body does prompt questions about whether cities should be designed in this manner, but there are also questions about whether private enterprise has been more efficient in serving city populations than local government authorities. This goes beyond the call of usual CSR practices, but highlights a model of where the practice may be moving towards in the future.

CONCLUSION

CSR can no longer be analogous to corporate philanthropy. Though philanthropy is still considered a valuable and more convenient way to make impact, the practice is widening its reach and actually presenting companies with opportunities that make financial and social sense. More of such projects will likely come out of the woodwork, especially if the updated Companies Bill 2011 is ratified.

If the cases of Tata and IHPC are a barometer of what is to come, urban India will not be ignored. With most large companies headquartered in cities, mandatory CSR practice will likely mean that they reach out locally to affect change. In fact, there is speculation that the mandatory CSR provision will require companies to give **preference to local projects**.

There are currently numerous CSR initiatives that cater to rural India, but may also translate well into the urban context. There is scope for such models to be adapted for the urban poor, and companies may need help from various sources to make that happen successfully. They will also need to work with one another; if the 2% clause is written into law, there needs to be a systemic, seamless and holistic approach to CSR projects so that they complement rather than compete with each other. Tata, Lafarge and their peers must first wake up to these opportunities and take steps towards realizing the impact potential of CSR in the urban context.



FLICKR USER ERIC PARKER

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE

Livelihoods Challenge for Transgender Women

BY LINA SONNE

Across cities in South Asia, transgender women, many of whom identify themselves as *hijras*, are marginalized and suffer some of the worst discrimination in the region. This was not always the case as *hijras* have a long history and used to be treated with a great deal of respect. Today oppression takes many forms, from general marginalization in society to lack of access to housing and public services to lack of legal identity, human rights, health facilities and livelihoods opportunities. With transgender women and *hijras* living primarily in cities, it makes them among the most marginalized and poorest of the urban population. And though they are highly visible with their flamboyant dressing and loud behavior, they are amongst the most ignored urban poor.

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
continued**TRADITIONAL LIVELIHOODS**

The **traditional mainstay** of *hijras* has been clapping hands and requesting alms, but also blessing newborn babies or dancing at ceremonies. However, many *hijras* are also engaged in sex work, often for lack of other viable opportunities, and a major concern in the community has therefore been the incidence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). Though no conclusive studies exist on the prevalence of HIV/AIDS or STDs within transgender women and *hijra* communities, since these communities have often been subsumed under the classification of men who have sex with men (MSM), a number of smaller surveys reviewed by the **UNDP in 2010** document rates of HIV/AIDS from 17% to as high as 57%, with similar rates for other STD occurrence.

Creating opportunities for employment and livelihoods training poses specific challenges because of the level of social exclusion, as well as the lack of empowerment.

Consequently, the focus of many non-governmental programs working with *hijra* and transgender women communities have focused specifically on STDs, including HIV/AIDS, treatment and prevention, and safe sex practices.

It is, however, becoming increasingly recognized that a more holistic approach to empowering and assisting *hijra* and transgender women communities is needed. Many transgender women and *hijras* suffer severe mental trauma both due to social exclusion and oppression, but also because of the challenges of coming to terms with their identity in an unaccepting society. An initiative funded by Swedish **SIDA** and **RFSU** with the Indian Integrated Network for Sexual Minorities (**INFOSEM**) has recognized this and moved beyond health to focus on **capacity building**, empowerment and living with dignity within the *hijra* and transgender women community. INFOSEM is a network of 126 organizations that are mainly working with *hijras* and transgender women, though other lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) groups are also included.

INTERNAL STRUGGLES AND EXTERNAL EXCLUSION

Social exclusion includes both direct exclusion from family, but also wider exclusion from society, such as from the right to defense against violence and human rights abuses to access to public services, education and employment.

At the same time, there are also factors within *hijra* communities that are unfavorable and keep many members from making independent choices that would allow them the freedom to more fully live their lives the way they want to. Benson Isaac, a board member of the Bangalore-based transgender rights organization **Sangama**, highlights the problem of ghettoization within these communities: “*Hijras* are often trapped in certain environments within the communities, which are often violent and disempowering. This makes it difficult to seek alternative livelihoods opportunities and many end up begging or as sex workers.” Isaac also stresses the need to escape from the hierarchical system of the guru (a structure whereby a group of *hijras* have sworn allegiance to a guru who, as the senior most member of this improvised family, controls money and decisions) in which many *hijras* live, in order to find dignity and empowerment.

SKILLS TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Creating opportunities for employment and livelihoods training pose specific challenges because of the level of their social exclusion, as well as the lack of empowerment. For example, given the severe disdain with which much of the South Asian

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE continued

population treats transgender women and *hijras*, it is likely that many people would be uncomfortable with having transgender colleagues at work or college and are likely to oppose such integration.

Nevertheless, one recent effort in Dhaka provides hope that society can change. Last year, the Bangladeshi government piloted a six-month [training scheme](#) for *hijras*. A participating technical school taught skills courses in videography, sewing and beauty care, including make-up application, in an effort to provide real skills that could land the participants a job, as well as to better integrate into society. The program has been a success. [Says](#) the government official overseeing it, Ebadur Rahman: “A lot of private sector people have approached us for recruiting *hijras*. Garment factories are the keenest as they are suffering from an acute labor crisis.” Several of the scheme’s alumni now work in videography and as makeup artists too.

However, neither employment nor income generation have been the scheme’s biggest achievement. Rather, [according to Rahman](#), “Our biggest achievement is that the *hijra* issue is no longer taboo. Even the policymakers have now realized that marginalization is not the answer.” To that end, the Bangladeshi government is now planning to extend the scheme and to set up a permanent training facility. There is also a plan to provide a pension for old age transgender women and *hijras*. Bangladesh is not the only country to consider a pension scheme: an initiative by the State Government of Tamil Nadu in India offers a small [state pension](#) of INR1,000 (~US\$18.90) per month to old and destitute transgender women and *hijras*.

In India, one of the success stories in livelihoods training has been the Pahal Beauty Parlor and Training Center, set up with the help of the [Pahal Foundation](#) on the outskirts of Delhi. The beauty parlor, which opened in 2009, is run by and caters exclusively to the transgender and gay communities. They often find it difficult to [access beauty treatment](#) or feel badly treated by customers and staff in other parlors. The Pahal Beauty Parlor offers more than the latest in beauty treatments; it is also a place for the community to meet and support each other. According to an article by Abhijit Kondhalkar, who has also made a film, [Meri Pehchaan](#), featuring the Pahal

The Pahal Beauty Parlor offers more than the latest in beauty treatments; it is also a place for the community to meet and support each other.

Beauty Parlor, “The idea was not only to open up a parlor for gay people, but also to connect it with a drop-in center that provides counselling, comfort and warmth to a community in desperate need of acceptance.”

In a different Indian city, Chennai, well-known actress, politician and transgender woman activist Kalki started the [Sahodari Foundation](#) in 2003 to address concerns around equity, justice and discrimination for transgender communities. One of several programs is the [Butterflies program](#), which provides entrepreneurial skill training to transgender women and *hijra* communities. In its pilot phase, the Foundation enlisted the help of [the Shasun Jain College for Women](#) to provide training to a group of transgender women, as well as a small loan of INR6,000 (~US\$113.20), to start the project. It resulted in an exhibition of handmade jewelry and the Foundation has since submitted a project proposal to the Social Welfare Board of Chennai.

EDUCATION FOR THE FUTURE

While the examples from Bangladesh and India featured in this article are inspiring in terms of providing livelihoods and skills training for employment, much remains to be done. The governments of most South Asian countries are, for the most part,

DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE
continued

turning a blind eye to the needs, as well as the abuses, of their transgender women and *hijra* communities. Governments clearly need to sensitize the general public to enable these communities to more easily enter mainstream work and education. They must also look into a range of more specific needs, such as customized education and livelihood training programs. While, according to the UNDP, there is an increased understanding for the need for more holistic but also nuanced and customized health support to transgender women and *hijra* communities, that understanding is yet to reach the areas of skills training and livelihoods creation.

More funding needs to be made available to organizations that are successfully able to build capacity and empowerment while undertaking skills training or other education. There is a need for much better understanding of the kind of employment

Given that education leads to empowerment, education is a key factor to encourage transgender women and *hijras* to break out of living in abusive environments.

and livelihoods opportunities that are viable today and the skills training needed to support these roles. Given the complex set of issues facing the transgender women and *hijra* communities, both internal (empowerment) and external (societal prejudice), these solutions may not be as straight-forward as training or providing jobs for other marginalized groups. As Issac notes: “Today, much of the support is firefighting, but nothing will change until we see this process as a continuum and there is a real ecosystem of support.”

At the educational level, higher education institutions need to become truly inclusive and provide opportunities for people from these communities to further their education, beyond short-term skills training. Given that education leads to empowerment, education is a key factor to encourage transgender women and *hijras* to break out of living in abusive environments that their social exclusion has led to. It also provides the opportunity to find sustainable employment beyond the beauty business.

Lastly, education institutions also have an obligation to educate the rest of society on what a truly inclusive society means. After all, the many and severe problems that the transgender women and *hijra* communities face are, for the very most part, created by the rest of society. By promoting more inclusive education policies and teaching materials, while enforcing rules against discrimination, the schools, colleges and universities of South Asia can contribute to shaping a more inclusive culture and to making the next generation one that is less prejudiced and narrow-minded, and more cognizant of the need for an open, inclusive and equitable urban world.

SOURCES

.....

<http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/Transgendersto-get-Rs-1000-monthly-pension/articleshow/15322613.cms>

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-09-27/bhubaneswar/30207816_1_transgender-mushroom-farming-livelihood

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article1159795.ece>

<http://www.sahodari.org/>

<http://www.france24.com/en/20120914-job-training-transforms-lives-bangladesh-transgender>

<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/hiv aids/Lost%20in%20translation.pdf>

http://www.undp.org/content/dam/india/docs/hijras_transgender_in_india_hiv_human_rights_and_social_exclusion.pdf

<http://www.salgbtnetwork.org/downloads.php>

<http://www.pahalfoundation.org/>

<http://www.infochangeindia.org/human-rights/changemakers/queer-beauty.html>

.....



CHANGE

CASE STUDY

Uncorking Bottled Light

BY NISHA KUMAR KULKARNI

Like its neighbors in South Asia, Bangladesh has witnessed an explosion in its urban population. With rural-to-urban migration continuously on the rise, it is estimated that **more than one-quarter** of Bangladesh's total population lives in cities, and according to UN-HABITAT in 2005, **70.4%** of urban residents lived in slum communities.

With such a high number of slum residents relegated to living in crowded quarters of a city, it is no wonder that because slum dwellings are so closely built next to one another, they have limited access to natural daylight from inside their homes. Tra-

CASE STUDY continued

ditionally, slum dwellings are dark, one-room structures with no window or passage through which sunlight can enter. As a consequence, slum residents end up using illegal electricity lines to power light bulbs in their homes. In Dhaka, this illegal consumption amounts to [approximately 275MW of electricity per year](#).

CHALLENGES OF ELECTRICITY ACCESS

In Dhaka, the [Mirpur](#) district has become a perfect study into the electricity needs and habits of slum-dwellers, as well as the potential for alternative light sources. Mirpur is a northeastern district in Bangladesh's capital city. It is home to the Dhaka Zoo, the National Botanical Garden, the Grameen Bank's head office and nationally recognized colleges and universities. Mirpur is also home to the Muslim Camp slum, where electricity consumption for daytime lighting is more than 1 kilowatt per household per day. According to Sajid Iqbal, a budding entrepreneur and a senior environmental science and management student at [North South University](#) in Dhaka, nearly 100% of Muslim Camp slum-dwellers use illegal electricity lines.

As is the case with other cities in the region, Dhaka faces serious energy challenges. The proliferation of slum communities across cityscapes directly translates into an upsurge in the demand for electricity. And since slum-dwellers are considered 'illegal' residents, they cannot procure legal electricity connections and are instead forced to procure illegal lines. Unfortunately, this exacerbates the deficiencies of existing energy infrastructure by further overwhelming and draining electricity networks.

In the context of such a challenging energy scenario, daytime usage of electricity must be closely monitored. For slum-dwellers, a substantial portion of daytime elec-

Mirpur is home to the Muslim Camp slum, where electricity consumption for daytime lighting is more than 1 kilowatt per household per day.

tricity usage is on lighting. Slum-dwellers face two critical challenges that force them to use light bulbs during daylight hours. The first challenge has to do with access to natural light: with little or no sunlight coming into dwellings during the day, slum residents are forced to either keep a light bulb on all day or sit in by-lanes outside their homes to get work done. Clearly, neither option posits an energy-efficient or convenient solution.

The second challenge that slum-dwellers face concerns the inconsistency of electricity supply. The consequences of power outages and load-shedding are more cumbersome for the poor than for the middle or wealthier classes. In Dhaka, load-shedding alone contributes to [an average of six hours](#) without electricity every day; power outages would drive that average much higher. Most city residents, irrespective of where they live, face these electricity blackouts, but load-shedding tends to most adversely affect the poor, especially since the middle and wealthier classes can afford back-up generators to tide them over during blackouts.

Load-shedding is [split almost evenly](#) between daytime (46%) and nighttime (54%). This scheduled switch-off of electricity usually only affects certain parts of a network; authorities are unlikely to turn off the electricity in the wealthier areas of a city where so much business activity is concentrated, but are more likely to do so in less developed or poorer districts. Since slum communities, for example, are not openly acknowledged as productive contributors to the urban economy, load-shedding worsens the inconsistency of electricity access experienced by the poor, regardless of whether or not their lines are legal.

CASE STUDY continued

BOTOL BATI

There are no easy solutions to resolve Dhaka's electricity woes, but the challenges faced by Dhaka's slum-dwellers have inspired an innovative lighting project. Iqbal has come up with a solution he calls *botol bati* ("bottled light"), or a bottle that emits natural light. "It's a very simple and effective technology for using sunlight directly without any complex mechanism," he explains. "Even slum-dwellers can install their own after some training."

Iqbal learned about the solar bottle light concept when he saw a documentary on [Liter of Light](#), a project by the My Shelter Foundation in the Philippines. The project was popular in Manila's slums, and Iqbal wanted to see if such a project could similarly work in Dhaka's slums. He did research to understand whether a bottled light project had already been launched in Bangladesh, or in any other South Asian country, but learned that it had not.

As a pilot run for his project, Iqbal used his own money and installed bottle lights in 12 households of the Muslim Camp slum. By walking through slum lanes, he deduced which homes got the least sunlight and determined their interest in partici-

Load-shedding worsens the inconsistency of electricity access experienced by the poor, regardless of whether or not their lines are legal.

pating in his project. He enlisted the help of his friend and national fencing teammate Mamun, an electrician without a formal education. Iqbal taught Mamun how to construct each bottle lamp, and since then, they have been working together to install solar bottle lamps in slum households.

The bottle lamp requires a small sheet of corrugated tin, tools to cut and cork, rebids, sealing glue and a two-liter plastic bottle. In a March 2012 interview with *The Daily Star*, Iqbal explained [how to construct the bottle lamp](#): "Take a tin frame and make a small hole in it where you have to fit the bottle. One-third of the bottle will be exposed outside, while two-third[s] will be inside the house. The bottle will be filled with water. Place the sheet with the bottle on the tin roof of the house and rebid the sheet with the tin roof. Then place [sealing glue] around the bottle and the sheet, so that when it rains, water does not go inside the house. If it was just a hole to let light inside the house, then the light will only fall in one direction. Using the bottle in this case will allow light to enter the bottle and reflect all around inside the house due to the water inside the bottle. The bottle does not need to be replaced for one or one-and-a-half year[s]. One bottle produces light equivalent to a 55W power bulb."

LET THERE BE LIGHT

Iqbal's primary objective with the bottle lamp is to educate slum-dwellers about power misuse and developing sustainable habits. He acknowledges that as the project stands now, the bottle lamp and its installation is not cheap. Material and human resource costs are high since he is using his own system to construct and install each bottle lamp. Iqbal says: "I have to maintain a full-time employed team because no one will work voluntarily or with poor payment. They have to depend on day-to-day basic income. And most of the people are employed here from [the] slum community. Also, all the materials are not available in Bangladesh, [especially] the sealing glue." To resolve the latter challenge, Iqbal is trying to forge a partnership with [SIKA](#), a manufacturer of specialty chemicals for construction and industry. Such a partnership would save Iqbal approximately TK400 (~US\$4.90) in additional fuel costs, which he must spend during load-shedding periods. For now, Iqbal has no plans to change

CASE STUDY continued

the design of the bottle – the current shape optimizes low carbon dioxide emissions, and he wants it to stay that way.

Most users of the bottle lamps have positive feedback and are satisfied. Iqbal notes that when slum-dwellers saw how light emitted from the bottle lamps, they were “amazed.” This amazement, however, has yet to overcome the challenges of acceptance of the *botol bati* concept by slum-dwellers. Though there is growing interest in bottle lamp installation, Iqbal observes that some people feel “more poor” to have to use a bottle

With the success of the *botol bati* project, there is tremendous scope for similar bottle lamp projects to easily start in city slums throughout South Asia.

lamp in their home instead of a traditional light bulb. He has organized community-based workshops and distributed pamphlets to combat this bias and make slum residents see merit in bottle lamps. So far, such efforts have been received positively.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND NEXT STEPS

The *botol bati* concept started as a pilot project, but it has inspired Iqbal to launch his own social enterprise called CHANGE. He is currently hard at work making that happen. Iqbal considers his pilot project the beginning of a movement, and he wholly supports youth involvement and other similar initiatives. For example, a colleague of Iqbal’s from the Bangladesh Youth Environmental Initiative has launched a similar *botol bati* project in another slum community of Mirpur. Iqbal feels it is his role is to support these peer projects and regularly monitor their impact.

Iqbal has made the *botol bati* concept the focal point of his university thesis and is looking into “how effective and socially accepted this technology is in Bangladesh as it is spreading all over the world.” His passion and commitment are receiving global recognition: recently, Iqbal has entered into a global partnership with Liter of Light, now operating in 11 countries. A research team from Switzerland will be visiting Dhaka in the near future to get further training on the *botol bati* concept and to discuss Iqbal’s research.

SOURCES

- http://articles.cnn.com/2011-08-30/world/eco.philippines.bottle_1_plastic-bottles-bulbs-slums?_s=PM:WORLD
- <http://businessinnovationfacility.org/profiles/blogs/botol-bati-bangladesh-s-solution-1>
- <http://www.imacitychanger.org/imacc/story/93-light-for-the-poor/>
- <http://aliteroflight.org>
- <http://www.scribd.com/doc/48579181/impact-of-load-shedding-in-dhaka-city>
- <http://www.thedailystar.net/campus/2012/03/01/spotlight.htm>
- <http://www.unhabitat.org/categories.asp?catid=248>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mirpur_Thana

CONCLUSION

The *botol bati* concept is relatively simple and its accessibility should be mimicked to address other challenges. Tools that are developed for the benefit of the urban poor need not be overly complex – simple design that is sophisticated enough to meet basic needs, such as a clean bottle lamp or a [hygienic water tap](#), guarantee ease-of-use, accessibility and potential for scale. With the success of the *botol bati* project, there is tremendous scope for similar bottle lamp projects to easily start in city slums throughout South Asia.

The case of Iqbal and the *botol bati* concept illustrate a particularly important lesson for urban planners. There is no need to continuously reinvent the wheel. Globally, there are numerous projects and initiatives underway addressing the challenges faced by the urban poor, and there are many to learn from and, in some cases, adapt. More of such global, integrative thinking is needed to help successful projects proliferate and make deeper impact. *Botol bati* has spread from the Philippines to Bangladesh. Who knows where it, and other ideas inspired by it, will go next?



FLICKR USER OMER WAZIR

NEWS DEEP DIVE

Power Policies in Pakistan

BY NEERA BHARDWAJ

While the world has been preoccupied with the Arab Spring in the Middle East for most of this year and last, Pakistan was witnessing a different kind of power struggle in the spring of 2012. Karachi, Pakistan's largest city and former capital, was rocked by public demonstrations protesting power cuts amidst rising temperatures and water shortages. There were similar protests in the city of Rawalpindi. Here, protestors forced markets to close and threatened to storm the Parliament House in Islamabad. Energy shortages led to similar unrest in other cities like Lahore, Peshawar and Jhang, where average daily power cuts last for 6-8 hours.

An impending warning came in May 2012 when nine of the country's independent power producers invoked charges of [sovereign default](#) against the government, threatening to pursue legal action unless they received approximately US\$375m in outstanding dues. Acknowledging the power crisis, President Asif Ali Zardari admitted: "No matter what successes we may achieve in the political field...the people will judge us by the measure of success in [overcoming the power shortage](#) and the government is fully conscious of it."

THE PAKISTAN ECONOMIC SURVEY 2011-12

The public sentiment was fully endorsed by the Pakistan Economic Survey 2011-12, recently unveiled by Finance Minister Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh. It blamed the energy crisis for [costing PKR380bn](#) (US\$40m), or 2% of GDP. And this despite the government doling out PKR1.1tn (US\$11.5bn) in subsidies to the sector over the last four years.

The survey highlights that power shortages were behind the poor performance of a number of industries in 2011-12. And perhaps no other industry is feeling the crippling

NEWS DEEP DIVE continued

effect of the continuous load-shedding and irregular power supply as much as the textile sector, the backbone of the Pakistani economy. At the January 2012 textile exhibition in Frankfurt, at which 219 Pakistani companies participated, orders received were for a paltry US\$3m, an 88% drop compared to the previous year, according to the Pakistan Textile Exporters Association. The exporters attributed this loss of potential business to their inability to commit to shipment deadlines due to uncertain power supplies back home.

In Punjab, industry remained closed for as many as 35 days in January thru February 2012, as gas authorities forced a shutdown. This was done to divert gas to the domestic sector and to meet CNG requirements. The shutdown, as well as considerable load-shedding, led to a number of mega-industrial groups [shifting their capital out of Pakistan](#), to countries like Bangladesh and Malaysia. In Faisalabad alone, more than 500 textile units and around 26 flagship companies closed their business after suffering heavy losses.

HISTORIC RESPONSE BY THE GOVERNMENT

The demand-supply gap in Pakistan's power sector has actually been widening steadily over the years. The Ministry of Power and Water has admitted that Pakistan was unable to meet [an average of 30% of the domestic power demand](#) in the spring of 2012. What suddenly worsened the situation were the floods in 2011, which damaged the distribution network extensively. The total damage to the sector was [PKR1.2 bn \(US\\$12.5m\)](#), according to Asian Development Bank Report, 2011. Energy shortages intensified during the second half of the fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, severely impacting industry in general and large-scale manufacturing in particular.

Pakistan has historically been grappling with a dismal power scenario. At the time of independence in 1947, the country inherited 60MW of power generation capability for a population of 31.5 million. While the government took control of the [Karachi](#)

At the January 2012 textile exhibition in Frankfurt, at which 219 Pakistani companies participated, orders received were for a paltry US\$3m, an 88% drop compared to the previous year.

[Electric Supply Company \(KESC\)](#) in 1952 – a major power generation, transmission and distribution company – it also created the [Water and Power Development Authority \(WAPDA\)](#), a semi-autonomous body in 1958, and the [Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission \(PAEC\)](#), which operates two nuclear power plants. By 1980, the capacity touched 3,000MW, which rose to over 7,000MW in 1990-91.

Realizing that it could not shoulder the investments required to meet growing power demand on its own, the government established the [Private Power and Infrastructure Board \(PPIB\)](#) in 1994 to facilitate private sector participation in the sector. Post that, a number of independent power producers (IPPs) came onto the scene. The PPIB also worked to attract and facilitate Foreign Direct Investment in Pakistan. A number of independent international power producers like [AES](#), [International Power](#), [El Paso](#) and [Tenaska](#) are now present in the market. Many other producers have also expressed interest in setting up power generation projects that would exploit indigenous resources, including hydel, wind, natural gas and coal.

CHASING POWER SUPPLY

However, these steps by the government proved to be too little, too late. Rapid urbanization, industrialization and rural electrification have seen electricity consumption

NEWS DEEP DIVE continued

in Pakistan growing at a high 9-10% per annum from 1970 to early 1990s. In the early 1990s, demand was outstripping supply by 15-25%, necessitating load-shedding of about 1,500-2,000MW. Subsequently, WAPDA and KESC were privatized in 2005 in an effort to restructure the power sector. Unfortunately, socio-political considerations prevented tougher measures. Heavily subsidized electricity prices meant that demand increased unchecked. On the other hand, the government could not afford the huge investments required to shore up supply. Compounding the issue is theft, inefficiencies and lack of maintenance of existing power plants. The result was the short-supply in 2011-12 that is estimated at about 6,000MW, part of which was met by expensive imports, worsening the fiscal deficit.

Another concerted bid was made to restructure the power sector in 2002. The Power Policy 2002, still currently employed, had several objectives. They were to define the scope of private, public-private and public sector projects; invite bids on tariffs through International Competitive Bidding (ICB); encourage exploitation of indigenous resources; fix the customs duty at 5% on the import of plant and equipment; enhance the share of renewable energy sources; and outline 'One-Window' support at the federal level for projects above 50MW. The policy also stated that the Ministry of Water and Power (through PPIB) would remain the key decision-making authority at the federal level.

Nonetheless, no policy has so far addressed the unique issue of circular debt that is crippling Pakistan's power sector and the national economy. What happens is the following: due to socio-political pressures, federal regulators fix tariffs far below the cost of production, promising to bridge the gap with subsidies. However, the government fails to pay its own power bills, let alone meet the financial commitments of all its subsidies. Unable to collect government or private revenue, power generation companies fail to clear their dues to the fuel suppliers. The fuel suppliers, in turn, default on their payment commitments towards refineries and international fuel suppliers. All this leads to massive inter-corporate debts. Needless to say, the global economic meltdown and rise in global oil prices worsened the crisis for power producers.

THE EFFECTS OF URBANIZATION

While the Pakistani government appears to be losing the battle on the supply side, demand shows no signs of abating. A major factor for the increase is urbanization. While the rate of population growth in Pakistan has reduced in recent years, its population continues to increase at an alarming rate in sheer numbers. Pakistan is the world's sixth most populous country and

Over 80% of electricity users in Pakistan are residential consumers, in stark contrast to India and China.

will become the fourth most populous by 2050. The rural and urban **populations will almost be the same** by the year 2030. As the urban population increases, there will be a rise in per-capita consumption of the household segment where residential power use will double by 2030, continuing the segment's reign as Pakistan's second largest consumer of energy.

Even now, more than 80% of electricity users in Pakistan are residential consumers, which is in stark contrast to other countries in the region, like India and China. In fact, it is very unusual for a developing country to experience a fall in its industrial sector's electricity requirement, but this is true in the case of Pakistan.

With energy use expected to more than double by 2030, Pakistan's power scenario is serious. Imports are expected to increase to over 30% by 2014 and grow to over 45% of total supply by 2030. To maintain economic growth of an average 5.6% of GDP until 2030 will require a **four-fold increase** in electricity generation. The challenges by then will be even bigger: with so much of supply coming from outside the county and a steep depletion of proven conventional natural gas reserves, there will be even more delays in implementing critical energy projects.

NEWS DEEP DIVE continued

SOURCES

.....

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/05/10/uh_oh_pakistan_can_t_pay_its_electric_bills

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2012%5C06%5C01%5Cstory_1-6-2012_pg7_12

<http://dawn.com/2012/06/01/energy-crisis-main-constraint-in-growth/>

<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2012/02/05/news/profit/punjab-devastated-by-energy-crisis/?printType=article>

<http://www.stimson.org/spotlight/pakistans-energy-crisis-beyond-hydroelectricity/>

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-3-111611-Economic-cost-of-energy-crisis-estimated-at>

<http://www.kesc.com.pk/en>

<http://www.wapda.gov.pk/>

<http://www.paec.gov.pk/>

<http://www.ppib.gov.pk/>

<http://www.aes.com/aes/index?page=home>

<http://www.iprplc-gdfsuez.com/>

<http://www.epelectric.com/>

<http://www.tenaska.com/>

<http://www.ppib.gov.pk/PowerPolicy2002.pdf>

http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2007%5C06%5C28%5Cstory_28-6-2007_pg7_9

<http://www2.adb.org/Documents/Produced-under-TA/41129/41129-01-pak-dpta-02.pdf>

<http://www.environment.gov.pk/nep/policy.pdf>

<http://tribune.com.pk/story/399141/geologists-integral-for-exploitation-of-natural-resources/>

http://www.ijens.org/Vol_11_I_05/110505-9393-IJBAS-IJENS.pdf

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jhimpir_Wind_Power_Plant

.....

SOLUTIONS

To break the vicious cycle that the power crisis has initiated in the country, the government can start off with best practices that would translate into significant annual savings:

- Eliminate load-shedding, which can avoid making losses of PKR524bn (US\$5.4m);
- Reduce electricity transmission and distribution losses by 7%, saving PKR7.3bn (US\$7.6m);
- Improve end-use energy efficiency that saves PKR41bn (US\$4.3m); and
- Encourage gas exploration to deliver 20% more supply, or savings of PKR37bn (US\$3.9m).

For immediate impact and to show its serious commitment to finding sustainable solutions, the government can start tackling losses in generation, transmission and distribution, which are as high as 24% of total power generation. Efforts should also be made to run thermal power plants at 75-80% of their installed capacity instead of the current 50%. Improving the productivity of existing plants is far more economical than setting up new power units.

While much is expected from the government and industry on-the-ground today, the Pakistani power crisis does not appear to suffer from a lack of policy. The latest policy is “**Vision 2005**” by the National Energy Conservation Center (ENERCON) and the Ministry of Environment, which published a report called “National Energy Conservation Policy 2005” to promote energy conservation practices and affect energy savings at the national level. Vision 2005 seeks to foster energy conservation through stimulation of resources and regularizing total energy management programs in all sectors of economy; develop an energy conservation market and facilitate commercialization; maximize the demand for energy from indigenous resources; and create an enabling environment to reduce energy intensity of different energy-consuming sectors through appropriate technological and policy measures.

CONCLUSION

Greater impetus perhaps needs to be given to the natural, renewable resources Pakistan is blessed with. There is abundant solar and wind energy available. It also has the fifth largest coal reserves in the world, amounting to approximately **185 billion tons**. Pakistan can generate more than 100,000 MW of electricity for next 30 years if it uses all coal available to it. At present, Pakistan generates only **0.79% of its total electricity from coal**.

Investors are beginning to exploit Pakistan’s natural resources. The **Jhimpir Wind Power Project** near Karachi is the country’s first wind power plant and will provide 50 MW of electricity at a cost of US\$136m. Developed by the Turkey-based Zorlu Group, the project has been launched with borrowings from the International Finance Corporation, the Asian Development Bank, Eco Trade & Development Bank and the Habib Bank Ltd. (HBL) of Pakistan.

Companies from China, Turkey, Norway and South Korea have also invested in wind power projects within the region. Turbines constructed in the Ghoroketi Bandar corridor, a 10,200-square-kilometer tract of land along the Arabian Sea, have the potential to provide an additional 60,000MW, an amount three times greater than current energy demand.

In the coming years, if Pakistan pursues rapid growth in the renewable energy sector, the country can make significant strides in developing a sustainable and economically-sound energy portfolio.

Regional News Summaries

Development & the Economy

.....

Youth unemployment rates are worsening in South Asia, but “pro-people” systems may be the key to boosting the region’s economic growth. Bangladesh has billions of unused foreign aid dollars. Conflicting reports on Pakistan’s poverty rate highlight a serious challenge.

UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG YOUTH GETTING WORSE: ILO REPORT

September 5, 2012

[South Asia] According to a new International Labor Organization (ILO) report entitled “Global Employment Outlook: Bleak Labor Market Prospects for Youth,” the global unemployment rate for young people will get worse in the wake of the euro crisis. Though the youth unemployment rate in developed economies is steadily falling, the opposite is true in developing economies. In South Asia, the current unemployment rate for young people is 9.5% and will increase by at least 0.3% by 2017; the projected global youth unemployment rate will reach 12.9% by the same year. The ILO is asking governments and other stakeholders to nurture pro-employment growth and job creation by promoting economic policy, labor market policy and youth entrepreneurship.

<http://www.thehimalayantimes.com/fullNews.php?headline=Unemployment+among+youth+getting+worse%3A+ILO+report&NewsID=346182>

DHAKA LETS BILLIONS OF AID DOLLARS LIE UNUSED

September 14, 2012

[Bangladesh] As of June 30, 2012, Bangladesh has US\$16.32bn in unused foreign aid. This is an increase of 28.42% from unused foreign aid funding recorded in the previous year. Local economists explain that the funds have not been used due to government inefficiencies, and many projects that could otherwise help the country’s development are on-hold. To date, the Government of Bangladesh has used US\$2.03bn, or 45%, of external assistance.

http://www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/NI14Df03.html

PRO-PEOPLE SYSTEM KEY TO ECONOMIC GROWTH, SAYS DEVELOPMENT REPORT

September 15, 2012

[South Asia] The general consensus of the 2012 Human Development in South Asia report is that a “pro-people” system, as well as a “people-centered” system, is needed to ensure sustainable economic growth in South Asia. At the launch of the report – focused on “Governance for People’s Empowerment” and authored by the Lahore University of Management Sciences – speakers from Bangladesh, India and Pakistan highlighted how poverty reduction efforts in the region have not stanchied the growth of poverty, which now includes approximately 500 million people. The report emphasizes how governance may have made regional economies bigger, but “not better.”

<http://www.sananews.net/english/pro-people-system-key-to-economic-growth-says-development-report-growth/>

NEWS SUMMARIES continued

POVERTY HOVERS AROUND 33%

September 24, 2012

[Pakistan] Nearly 33% of Pakistan’s population, or 58.7 million people, live in poverty. In a new report by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI) called “Clustered Deprivation: District Profile of Poverty in Pakistan,” acute poverty is measured and analyzed. The report’s publication coincides with the Planning Commission’s poverty estimate of ~12%. A different study by the Oxford Department of International Development, however, uses the Multidimensional Poverty Index (an international standard) to determine the ‘true’ rate of poverty in Pakistan. The study shows that 20 districts in Pakistan have incidence of acute poverty, and 16 of these districts are located in the provinces of Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

<http://dawn.com/2012/09/25/poverty-hovers-around-33pc/>

Education & Healthcare

South Asia needs to ramp up awareness and action around maternal mortality rates and the incidence of stroke. Bangladesh must not only prioritize education reform, but also health-care provision for the urban poor. India launches a center for mental health, while one of its states implements a health insurance scheme for the poor. Pakistan seeks to learn from India’s experience of the Right to Education Act.

ENSURING HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION IN BANGLADESH

September 2, 2012

[Bangladesh] According to lecturer and writer Salahuddin Ahmed, Bangladesh does not have an enforced education standard at the elementary and college levels. A comprehensive education system is needed, but there are other development challenges that the government has prioritized first. Good teachers, access to digital resources and proper English-language instruction should not be delayed since “...students today will become the key members of [Bangladesh] who would be responsible for the overall development of [the] country.”

http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/more.php?news_id=141870&date=2012-09-02

HEALTH FACILITIES FOR EXPECTANT MOTHERS

September 2, 2012

[South Asia] Nearly 99% of the world’s maternal deaths happen in developing countries, and approximately 33% of these deaths take place in South Asia. New research suggests that maternal mortality rates have decreased, but the numbers still prove to be too high in the developing world. There is a key issue of awareness where people do not recognize the importance of seeking medical attention at the right time. Traditional birth attendants in such countries may not have a sophisticated knowledge of obstetrics and are therefore unable to handle potentially life-threatening situations. Tradition may also dictate that births happen in the home and not at a proper health-care facility, but this contributes to the dangers mothers face during delivery. More awareness needs to be generated to sensitize pregnant women and their families to the criticality of medical help and well-equipped healthcare facilities.

<http://dawn.com/2012/09/02/health-facilities-for-expectant-mothers/>

STROKES EMERGE AS A MAJOR HEALTH THREAT TO SOUTH ASIANS

September 10, 2012

[South Asia] A new World Health Organization (WHO) report cites that 41% of the global population vulnerable to strokes is from South Asia. In South Asia, approximately 94% of deaths resulting from stroke occur in people under the age of 70. The National Health Survey of Pakistan, for example, has found that 500,000-800,000 people suffer from stroke and heart disease. General practitioners in the country

NEWS SUMMARIES continued

have adopted the practice of prescribing sedatives to control blood pressure in stroke patients, which actually worsens their health conditions, despite the availability of effective medications on the market.

<http://pakobserver.net/detailnews.asp?id=173180>

RESEARCH CENTER ON MENTAL HEALTH

September 13, 2012

[India] Over the next 20 years, it is projected that neurological, mental and substance abuse-related disorders will have a greater economic toll globally than any other non-communicable disease (i.e., cancer, diabetes, heart disease). In India, such disorders make up 12% of the country's total disease burden. Suicide, for example, claims approximately 200,000 lives every year. As many as 90% of Indians who suffer from neurological, mental and substance abuse-related disorders (e.g. alcoholism, autism, depression, epilepsy, mental retardation, psychoses) do not receive evidence-based healthcare. What is more is that India faces a "severe" shortage of mental health specialists: though estimates show that the country should have 132,000 psychiatrists, it has only 3,000. In response, the New Delhi-based Public Foundation of India has established the Center for Mental Health, which will be a "collaborative network of institutions in South Asia, with the shared goals of promoting research, building capacity and advocacy aimed at reducing inequalities in access to care and health outcomes." An official group has also been formed to redesign the National Mental Health Program and to draft India's first National Mental Health Policy.

<http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/Delhi/article3885589.ece>

NEW HEALTH INSURANCE SCHEME FOR THE POOR IN JHARKHAND

September 17, 2012

[India] The State Government of Jharkhand will launch a new health insurance scheme for families living below the poverty line (BPL). The scheme, called the CM's Health Insurance Scheme, will emulate the central government's National Health Insurance Scheme. The state government conducted its own survey to prepare a list of BPL families, not all of whom are eligible for the central government's scheme. Nearly 1.1 million BPL families would have better access to healthcare under the new state scheme.

http://www.igovernment.in/site/new-health-insurance-scheme-poor-jkhand?utm_source=newsletter-core&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120917

BANGLADESH'S URBANIZATION CREATING A HEALTHCARE BLACK HOLE

September 18, 2012

[Bangladesh] According to last year's national census, more than 150 million people in Bangladesh live in urban areas. Each year, the country's urban population is increasing by ~6%. Dhaka absorbs a high proportion of rural-to-urban migrants, and its slums are exploding. Forty percent of Dhaka's residents are slum-dwellers, and government budgets do not accommodate for public services provision to the urban poor population. In particular, city hospitals are struggling: one of Dhaka's largest hospitals is operating at 50% staff capacity and just 800 beds to accommodate 3,000 patients. New city migrants, especially women, are reluctant to seek medical care, even when necessary, because of hidden costs. Initiatives like BRAC's Manoshi project, however, show that there are ways to alleviate the healthcare burden of the poor. Greater awareness and the proliferation of such efforts need to be expanded to meet the poor's healthcare needs.

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/global-development/2012/sep/18/bangladesh-urbanisation-healthcare-black-hole>

NEWS SUMMARIES continued

PAKISTAN CURIOUS ABOUT INDIA’S TRYST WITH RIGHT TO EDUCATION

September 19, 2012

[Pakistan] Pakistan wants to learn from India’s Right to Education (RTE) Act. An Indian education delegation accompanied S.M. Krishna, the external affairs minister, to Islamabad in early September to relay India’s experiences in implementing the RTE Act. Pakistan wants to reform its education system: though the country’s Constitution was amended in 2010 to guarantee education to all children aged five to 16, it has yet to introduce supporting laws to enact the amendment.

<http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/pakistan-curious-about-india-tryst-with-right-to-education/1/217882.html>

Energy & the Environment

A state in India proposes a ‘green budget’ for the next fiscal year. Severe flooding in Pakistan has affected hundreds, if not thousands, of lives.

HIMACHAL TO PROPOSE ‘GREEN BUDGET’

September 12, 2012

[India] The State Government of Himachal Pradesh intends to propose a ‘green budget’ for the next fiscal year. The budget would include provisions to develop “tools and methodologies for green accounting in planning and budgeting processes,” explains Chief Minister Prem Kumar Dhumal. The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) will open a center in Shimla to help the state adopt appropriate measures to combat climate change.

http://www.igovernment.in/site/himachal-propose-green-budget?utm_source=newsletter-core&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120912

FLOODS WREAK HAVOC IN PAKISTAN

September 17, 2012

[Pakistan] Heavy monsoon rains in early September have triggered flash floods and landslides in northern Pakistan, killing 217 people and destroying hundreds of homes. The most affected states are Baluchistan, Punjab and Sindh. The total number of people affected has not yet been determined, but various sources report figures ranging from 7,361 to 160,633. Disaster management authorities at the national and provincial levels are working with local authorities to provide humanitarian assistance to affected populations.

<http://southasia.oneworld.net/todaysh headlines/floods-wreck-havoc-in-pakistan>

Government & Policy

Bangladesh’s personal laws may be pushing women into poverty and food insecurity. In India, a child nutrition scheme is being restructured.

BANGLADESH’S PERSONAL LAWS DISCRIMINATE AGAINST WOMEN

September 17, 2012

[Bangladesh] According to the NGO Human Rights Watch (HRW), Bangladesh’s laws on marriage, separation and divorce may trap women in abusive relationships or drive them into poverty when couples separate. A new report by HRW discusses how such laws lead to homelessness, hunger and ill health for separated or divorced women and their children. Previous reports by other agencies support this claim: the UNDP and World Food Program have recorded “significantly” higher levels of poverty and food insecurity among female-lead households in Bangladesh.

http://zeenews.india.com/news/world/bangladesh-s-personal-laws-discriminate-against-women-hrw_800059.html

NEWS SUMMARIES continued

CABINET NOD TO RESTRUCTURED CHILD NUTRITION SCHEME

September 25, 2012

[India] The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved a plan to strengthen and restructure the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS), which focuses on maternal and child health and nutrition. The renewed scheme aims to prevent and reduce under-nutrition in young children (up to three years old) by 10 percentage points; enhance early development and learning results in children under the age of six; and improve care and nutrition of women and girls, such as by reducing the prevalence of anemia by 20%. The restructured ICDS will be rolled out over the next three years, beginning with 200 high-burden districts identified by the government.

http://www.igovernment.in/site/cabinet-nod-restructured-child-nutrition-scheme?utm_source=newsletter-core&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120925

Infrastructure

.....

Bangladesh may re-secure funding from the World Bank for the Padma Bridge project. A state in India is ready to relaunch city bus services.

JHARKHAND CITIES TO GET NEW BUS SERVICE PROVIDERS

September 19, 2012

[India] More than 190 buses belonging to the Jharkhand Tourism Development Corporation (JTDC) have been removed from service due to the lack of service providers in the cities of Dhanbad, Jamshedpur and Ranchi. However, the State Government of Jharkhand has secured funding for buses from the JNNURM program: Dhanbad and Ranchi will get 70 buses, while Jamshedpur will get 50 buses. Since its launch in 2010, the JTDC has outsourced bus operations, but has been facing serious troubles due to strikes and harassment. Private operators have refused to provide services due to resulting financial losses. The JTDC is now looking for service providers to relaunch bus services and also make a profit for the state.

http://www.igovernment.in/site/jharkhand-cities-get-new-bus-service-providers?utm_source=newsletter-core&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=20120919

WORLD BANK COULD REVISIT BANGLADESH LOAN CUT-OFF

September 20, 2012

[Bangladesh] The World Bank (WB) is reconsidering its decision to cancel a US\$1.2bn loan for the controversial Padma Bridge project. Construction of the bridge would transform Bangladesh's poor southern region. Funding was cancelled earlier this year due to suspicions of corruption and the fact that the Government of Bangladesh had not adequately investigated "high-level" corruption. A statement issued by the WB shows that the government has taken necessary action to address corruption concerns and has "agreed to a series of measures as a pre-requisite for any renewed implementation." Such measures include new procurement arrangements, greater transparency and clean construction of the proposed bridge.

http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jgvBPj88Uxc_wgFUIRs1hn0QYUnA?docId=CNG.f3ff011658def64410d1d8d94eec9bce.111

People & Poverty

.....

More data is needed on abandoned children in Bangladesh to head off trafficking. In India, Kolkata demonstrates just how disenfranchised the urban poor can be. Nepal has made progress in alleviating poverty, but more must be done. A new report from Pakistan highlights how children's rights are not being safeguarded.

NEWS SUMMARIES continued**MORE DATA NEEDED ON ABANDONED CHILDREN, TRAFFICKING**

September 6, 2012

[Bangladesh] Bangladeshi children who have been abandoned by their parents are vulnerable to child traffickers, but combating this challenge is impeded by a lack of data on missing children. Thousands of cases of children trafficked from Bangladesh and other countries go unreported every year. Michael McGrath, country director of Save the Children Bangladesh, says: "The only reliable statistics [on missing children] are those that refer to the number of children 'rescued' each year, and the number of cases opened against traffickers or traffickers convicted each year. Each of these figures is very small." There is a lack of public awareness of the depth of the trafficking issue, just as there is no national integrated reporting system in place to keep track of children. Nasima Begum, director-general of the Department of Social Service, notes that there needs to be more coordinated efforts between the Home Ministry, the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics and NGOs to improve data-gathering on the country's missing children.

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/96250/BANGLADESH-More-data-needed-on-abandoned-children-trafficking>

KOLKATA'S POOR POORER THAN THE REST

September 12, 2012

[India] West Bengal ranks fifth on India's poverty charts, after Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The per-capita income of capital city Kolkata's poor population is INR27 (~US\$0.51) per day. Twenty-six percent of West Bengal's population is classified as BPL, while 22% of the state's urban population falls in the BPL category. Action Aid regional manager Chittaranjan Mondal says: "These people are caught in a vicious trap. Since they are either homeless or reside in unregistered slums, they don't have identity proofs like voter's ID or ration card. As most of them have never voted, they don't form a vote bank to interest political parties. The marginalization becomes absolute as they cannot avail of poverty alleviation schemes." According to the 2011 Census, there are 70,000 homeless people living in the city, up from 55,000 in the 2001 Census, but NGOs believe that the true statistic is much higher.

http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-09-12/kolkata/33788485_1_poverty-line-beautification-drive-bpl

IMPROVING LIVES

September 24, 2012

[Nepal] Nepal is the poorest country in South Asia. Nearly 1.2 million families live below the poverty line and suffer from illiteracy, malnutrition and unemployment. The country has, however, made progress towards poverty alleviation, particularly over the last 15 years when the poverty rate decreased from 42% in 1995-1996 to 21% in 2010-2011. This reduction can be attributed to inward remittances, an increase in agricultural farm wages, an increase in urbanization and the reduction of traditional household sizes. Still, more concerted efforts must be directed towards poverty alleviation: the Government of Nepal must, for example, identify all BPL families and implement an effective policy to help these families secure employment. Only when the country's poor is taken care of will economic development, peace and stability follow.

http://www.myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=42283

WHOSE CHILD IS THIS?

September 6, 2012

[Pakistan] The Society for the Protection of the Rights of the Child (Sparc) has published the State of Pakistan's Children 2011 and reports some disheartening statistics. There are 25 million children out of school and 10 million child workers employed by factories and other workplaces to support their families. It is estimated that 300,000 children live on the streets and have no formal home. Sixty-eight percent of Pakistan's children have stunted growth, with that statistic growing every year. The big problem behind these statistics is the fact that Pakistan has a poor record of human rights implementation to protect children's rights.

<http://dawn.com/2012/09/26/whose-child-is-this/>

NEWS SUMMARIES continued

Water & Sanitation

South Asia must address leakages in urban water systems. India must ramp up efforts towards adequate sanitation and investing in new water resources.

TOO MUCH WATER LOST TO URBAN LEAKS

September 12, 2012

[South Asia] South and Southeast Asia are home to 60% of the world’s population, but only 36% of the world’s water resources. Undersupply of water increasingly becomes a problem with rapid urbanization and population growth, environmental degradation, industrialization, climate change and over-usage of groundwater. However, governments and other stakeholders can alleviate the water burden by addressing the issue of leakages. For example, Dhaka loses up to 50% of its water due to substandard and leaking pipes, New Delhi loses 50% of its water due to leakages in its distribution pipeline and Karachi loses more than 33% of its water due to pipe leakages and pilferage. Amy Leung, director of the urban development and water division of the Asian Development Bank, says: “One of the major challenges facing Asia, particularly in most urban centers, is the large proportion of water loss in distribution networks. By cutting physical losses to half the present level, 150 million people could be supplied with already treated water.”

<http://www.irinnews.org/Report/96290/ASIA-Too-much-water-lost-to-urban-leaks>

SIMPLE & CHEAP SOLUTION TO INDIA’S GRAVE WATER CRISIS: WASTE WATER RECYCLING

September 23, 2012

[India] By 2050, India’s demand for water may increase by 1.65 times current levels to 1.18 billion cubic meters, a situation made worse by the gradual depletion of fresh water resources. Desalination is quickly becoming popular: the states of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, for example, have already invested in desalination plants. However, desalination may not be the only option. Sridhar Vedachalam, a researcher from the New York State Water Resources Institute at Cornell University, writes that “desalination may provide a reliable supply of water to a city with chronic water shortage, but it is hardly the best option for more than one reason.” The key reason being that desalination does not address the challenge of managing the resulting extra millions of liters of wastewater. Recycled wastewater, though, does propose a balanced solution. While other countries around the world are more pro-active about wastewater recycling efforts, India has been slow to catch on. The average cost of wastewater treatment is INR4.5-6 per kiloliter, and if the water is treated to be drinkable, the cost jumps to INR12 per kiloliter. Though the price increases, it is still far less than what municipalities must spend to bring potable water to city residents: INR20 per kiloliter in Delhi to INR40-60 per kiloliter in Chennai.

http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2012-09-23/news/34022987_1_desalination-plant-water-resources-waste-water

POOR SANITATION KILLS 1,600 CHILDREN DAILY IN INDIA

September 29, 2012

[India] Inadequate sanitation costs India 6.4% of its GDP. According to a new report by Dasra called “Squatting Rights,” more than 1,600 children under the age of five die daily from diarrhea stemming from inadequate sanitation. The report highlights other alarming statistics: for instance, in Delhi’s slums up to 70% of girls are verbally harassed and 50% of them are victims of physically assault – this is a consequence of not being in school due to a lack of safe sanitation facilities they can access.

http://www.ummid.com/news/2012/September/29.09.2012/poor_sanitaton_in_india.htm

Events

**NATIONAL SEMINAR ON SUSTAINABLE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT:
OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES**

December 13-14, 2012

Palayamkottai, India

<http://www.sxcbotany.com>

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND SOCIAL WORK

January 3-5, 2013

Kochi, India

<http://www.dyuti2013.blogspot.in>

REDEFINING EDUCATION: EXPANDING HORIZONS

January 10-12, 2013

Mumbai, India

<http://bttcintconf.blogspot.in>

**INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENERGY RESOURCES AND
TECHNOLOGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

February 7-9, 2013

Howrah, India

<http://www.icertsd.org>

Editorial Team

ADVISORS

Pawan Mehra and Aparajita Agrawal

MANAGING EDITOR

Lina Sonne

SENIOR WRITERS

Usha Ganesh and Nisha Kumar Kulkarni

DESIGN

HNH!digital

SUBSCRIPTION

Subscription to Searchlight South Asia is free.

FREQUENCY

This newsletter is produced on a monthly basis.

About Intellectap

Intellectap is a global advisory firm that provides intellectual capital to catalyze businesses with positive social and environmental outcomes.

Intellectap offers Investment Banking and Business Consulting to clients positioned at the intersection of inclusive and mainstream sectors, including agriculture, food and rural business; clean energy; education; financial inclusion; healthcare, water and sanitation; and technology for development. We build sector knowledge and nurture networks through thought leading forums, publications and content management services. We also initiate and lead solutions to development issues and incubate new development ideas and innovations.

Intellectap's clients span the inclusive business spectrum. We serve the needs of entrepreneurs, investors, financial institutions, market builders and corporations by demystifying the complex interplay of inclusive and mainstream. Simultaneously, we work with governments, developmental, financial, and social institutions, bringing sound business understanding to issues concerning development.