

## ECOSANITATION AS FUTURE SANITATION AND FERTILISER Important Contribution to Government's Sanitation Goals

“The decreasing quality and quantity of fresh water is one of the biggest challenges for developing countries like Bangladesh. Water used to wash human excreta is not recycled, rather it becomes contaminated by hazardous substances causing serious water-borne diseases”, said Dr. Mujibur Rahman, Professor of Civil Engineering Department of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET). Dr. Mujibur Rahman was one of the experts, presenting a keynote paper at the workshop titled “Integrated support for sustainable urban environment (ISSUE-2)”, organised by Bangladesh Association for Social Advancement (BASA) and Practical Action- Bangladesh at the Seminar Room of LGED Bhaban in Dhaka on the 26<sup>th</sup> May.

Waste generated from human and animal excreta and household garbage should be managed as a resource and can be used as an alternative for chemical fertilisers. By using the proper technology urine and human excreta, that contain many nutrients, can replace the chemical fertilisers now used in the agriculture. Ecosan toilets or ecosanitation are using this technology, they do not need precious drinkable water, are easy to install and might become an important contribution to the government's goal of bringing the whole country under sanitation by 2010. However, monitoring and destroying possible pathogenic bacteria should be part of the technology was the advice of the special guest of the workshop, Chief Engineer of the Department of Public Health Engineering, Mr. Md. Mustafizur Rahman.



Speaking as Chief Guest of the workshop on ISSUE-2 Mr. Paul Edwards, UNICEF's Chief Water and Environmental Sanitation added that Bangladesh should give more importance to its sanitation issues, because the issue of sanitation is becoming worse, specially in slum areas. Mr. A.K.M. Mozammel Huq, the Mayor of Gazipur Municipality mentioned that in his area they have already started, with cooperation of some NGO's , using solid waste to make compost, which is very useful.

On behalf of Practical Action, Team Leader Mr. M. Iqbal Karim said that the environmental situation in Bangladesh, with high population density, high poverty and wastes that might enter the food chain is getting worse and the government's goal of bringing the whole country under sanitation by 2010 is not satisfactory. Practical Action Country Director Ms. Veena Khaleque also spoke at the workshop, presided by BASA's Executive Director A.K.M. Shirajul Islam.



The experts participating in the workshop shared the opinion that introduction of ecosanitation is an important initiative in the field of sanitation and a possible alternative for chemical fertilisers. The organizers of the workshop, BASA and Practical Action, expressed that they want to expand the ecosanitation project they already started on a pilot basis. ISSUE-2 is a global project, being implemented in 15 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. The project activities are coördinated by WASTE, The Netherlands and the project is funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. With the international cöoperation and the support and contribution of many national experts the ISSUE-2 project will have a real global perspective.