

## Case Story: Creating livelihood through sanitation – Village CRP as an entrepreneur



Md. Erfan Ali of Bangdhara village of Ghatnagar Union Parishad is unmarried with no regular employment. He has been working as a Community Resource Person (CRP) in WASH project of DASCOH which makes him familiar with DASCOH's approach and work. DASCOH, on the other hand, as part of its initiative to promote sanitation marketing encouraged and supported Erfan to establish a sanitary centre. To start off with the sanitary centre is expected to produce rings and slab for which there already exists a market. The demand for ring and slabs has got further fillip in Ghatnagar UP as WASH project-UP collaboration is encouraging the communities to make a contribution in building material (besides the cash contribution). Since there was no local production unit in Ghatnagar inspite a ready client base (users, UP, other development partners), promoting local entrepreneurship in sanitation marketing made for a sound business opportunity. Field Facilitator Md. Alomgir Faruqi seized this opportunity by offering support to Md. Erfan Ali in establishing a sanitation centre. Erfan was reluctant and resisted the idea as he lacked the necessary know how and wherewithal (start up capital, production site, etc) to initiate such a venture. He was also sceptical about the financial viability of the proposed business. The Field Facilitator Md. Alomgir Faruqi in addition to explaining him the potential of such a business also encouraged him to observe other sanitation centres to gather firsthand experience. The exposure to other similar centres convinced him about the workability/viability of such an enterprise and he decided to set up a sanitation centre of his own.



All business ventures need a start up capital and so did Erfan's sanitation centre. Lacking in money of his own, Erfan turned to his father for financial support who, not convinced about the viability of such a business, chose to stay away. Convinced that sanitation centre made for good business, Erfan persisted and

knocked other doors. Finally, help came in from corners and in forms that he had not expected. His cousin came forward and provided 3 acre land to be used as production site and another friend provided a truck load of brick and sand. In May 2014 Erfan recruited a mason. With the site, skilled personnel, and raw material in place, he started production of rings and pans. He also began producing materials used for cow feed and rice processing. In the first month (May 2014) he sold product worth 8000/TK and the next month sale of rings and slab brought in another 70'000 TK. As of now villagers, the WASH project and BRAC are his main clients. He has a stock of 30 sets of rings and slabs. More order is in the pipeline. Engagement with the enterprise seems to have brought stability in his life. Erfan is profuse in expressing his gratitude towards DASCOH (and Faruqi specially) for all the encouragement, motivation and support. He says now "I have a secure employment which will help me settle in life."