

Aguastan News

27. July 2017

YOUR FAVOURITE NEWSPAPER

SINCE 1980

John Brogan, *Terre des hommes*

The presentations of the previous day resonated with me on different levels:

1) Owing to its legal framework component, the RRR programme significantly contributed to the formalisation of the resource recovery and safe reuse sector in Kampala and Lima. In many countries around the globe, the circular economy also represents a unique opportunity for the WASH sector to “formalise” itself in the pursuit of the sustainable development goals.



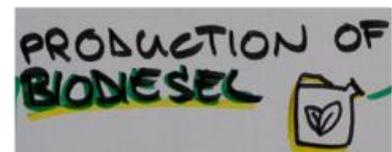
2) Building-up a circular economy is very much a story of human and a system transformation. The strong demand for customised RRR business coaching in Lima revealed the great number of small, innovative companies out there, that are interested - or already involved - in circular economy approaches. Concurrently, the millions of on-site sanitation users will realise awareness of their role as consumers and producers in the service chain. Each of them can contribute to circular production streams in a different way and together, they can make the system work.

3) Both the Lima and Kampala cases related the “constant exchange between institutions and privates.” For the past few years or even decades, members of the WASH sector have been running after others: we’ve chased the health sector for health facilities and Sanitation Safety Plans, we run after the private sector to seek financial investment and of late we’re even supposed to chase consumers and turn them into customers. With the circular economy, we finally have an opportunity to get the health sector, the private sector and consumers to run after us.



4) The Kampala project mentioned the need for “ownership and enforcement” of Sanitation Safety Plans for Faecal Sludge Management. With Community-Led-Total-Sanitation we needed to wrap our heads around self-monitoring systems that encourage communities to maintain their open defecation free certifications. Similarly, service providers will require support to integrate for Sanitation Safety Plans that encourage a robust monitoring of the system.

5) Biodiesel production presents us with an interesting circular economy approach in its own right, but if we look beyond the main product, we may discover even further business opportunities: The glycerine that is produced in the process - for instance - may be reused for soap production. Hence, when we think about circular business models, we should always ask ourselves, “What additional by-products and associated services will further enhance the model?”



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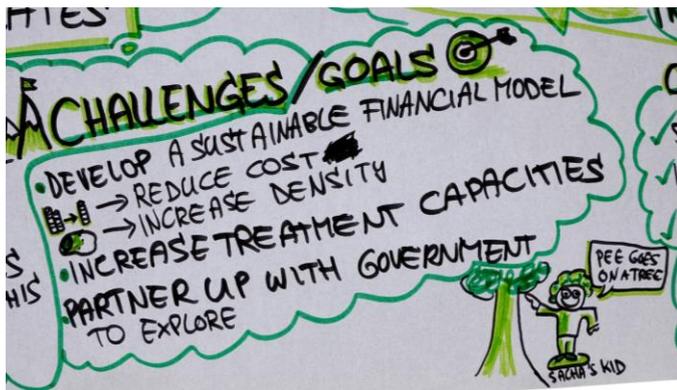
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Cécile Mazaleyrat, PEPA

I volunteered to report for AGUASAN news, because I believe that when you receive, you should also give back. Additionally, yesterday's presentations were in direct or indirect link to the Haitian context, to which I have a specific insight.



The second day of the AGUASAN workshop featured two approaches that were quite different, but both related to a similarly vulnerable context.

The SOIL example was portrayed as a “small scale” process. The presentation included many figures and concluded that financial sustainability has yet to be achieved. The example on fuel briquettes on the other hand featured a lot of positive and promising statements on the scale up potentials, without actually providing any figures on the financial sustainability of the intervention. This made me hesitant, because from my experience with the Haitian UNDP Briquette program, I know that successful project exit is not necessarily a given in this specific context.



Neither approaches were backed by financial statements that included detailed figures such as marketing expenses or revenue and cost forecasts for upcoming years. From a private sector perspective, it is difficult to understand the financial feasibility and the rationale behind growth of such initiatives and I am yet to see concrete proof that wide scaling of circular economy approaches is possible.

This makes me wonder: should circular economy really be about fast and wide scale-up of fragile business models or is there place for a micro circular economy, in which small, targeted business

models are multiplied?

It takes time to construct the necessary knowledge, to reinforce and to grow human resources, to trigger behavioral change and to ensure correct management and sustainability. I believe that we should focus on starting small, making sure that it works and then evaluating the business and scaling potential within the market space (offer, demand, capacities).

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30. July 2017

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Paulina Pavlova, Co-Cycle

What stuck with me the most from the previous day and what turned into the main take-home message from me is the realization, that circular economy and related models will always need to bring together different stakeholders for the system to work.

- There is a big potential for Public-Private-Partnerships and utilities are looking for small enterprises to work with
- There is a lot of interest for projects that can be implemented by NGOs, but they still need to be developed
- Private investment is available and ready to be invested.

